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PERFORMANCE VAUXHALL



WELCOME!

There's something exciting about being in the heart of show season. Not only are forums and Facebook groups buzzing with excited conversations about convoys, meeting points, and post-show discussions – but cars are also being revealed, and, in some cases, shown off for the very first time. It's a great time for us too, as we 'fill out boots' with potential feature cars to put in the mag over the winter months.

Sure enough we've got a selection of cracking cars this issue, some of which we discovered at PVS, including Ricky Neal's VXR-propelled Astravan (page 84), and Ashley Conrad's innovative 'stroked' Corsa D (page 20).

As you'd expect, this being the post-PVS issue we've got a huge show report (page 28) and if your car's not in it, don't worry – we'll be running part 2 next issue,

which goes on sale on 25th September.

I know that feels like months away, and it's easy to forget a date so far in the future – which brings me onto subscriptions – never has there been a better time to sign up for *Performance Vauxhall*, an entire year's worth of magazines for just £27! Plus it gets delivered straight to your door, and you'll never miss an issue again. Pop on over to page 120 and have a look at the offer.

I do hope you enjoy this issue, and don't forget that we're always looking for feature cars, Hall of Fame cars, and Reader Restos, so if you fancy a bit of that action, then drop us a line at performancevauxhall@kelsey.co.uk

Don

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VAUXHALL**
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FOR DETAILS

MEET THE TEAM

The people who bring you *Performance Vauxhall*, and what we've been up to this month...



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Developed rickets due to not having seen any sunshine at all this summer in Scotland.



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Getting far too carried away with a Swedish number with a large arse.

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE: 25 SEPTEMBER 2015

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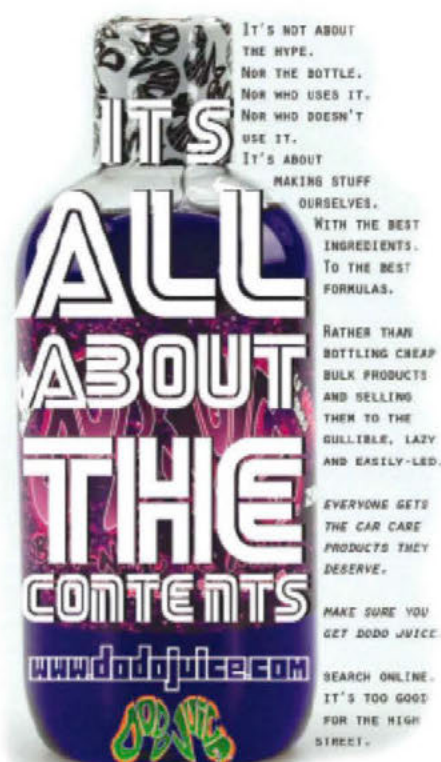
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WORDS Jarkle PHOTOS Steve McCann

HYBRID THEORY

Purists look away, Glenn Robinson has combined one of Opel's most sought after cars with one of Cosworth's greatest engineering marvels, and the results are nothing short of spectacular!

The car world is littered with examples of stunning engineering solutions, expertise and clever thinking, and we could fill the

entire magazine by listing our favourite engines and car combinations. Picking and choosing the perfect blend of engine, car and transmission really is something of an art, and certainly not something to be taken lightly. There's also another factor at play here, and that's pre-set rules – often very strict and uncompromising rules – dictate what engines should be bolted into certain cars. C20LET into Corsa? No problem. C20LET into RS Turbo (yep, one exists)? All hell breaks loose. We can understand how some purists hate the idea of mixing Vauxhall and Ford, but we also can't escape the idea that being so against combining the two means they run the risk of missing out on some truly special machines.

This Ascona is, as you've probably already gathered, is one such car. From the outside it looks like a regular 400 replica, the kind of car that ordinarily has an XE or a C20LET 'up front,' but peek beneath the bright green bonnet of this example and you'll spot something rather different – a Cosworth YB. This is an engine





FAST FACTS

- * Cosworth YB with T34 turbo
- * T5 five-speed with competition paddle clutch
- * Motorsport prepared shell in Deutz Green
- * Five-linked rear end with semi-floating Atlas axle
- * 9x15in Group 4 Revolution alloys

ASCONA COSWORTH



A trusty T34 turbo provides ample boost!

that should need no introduction, though it's probably worth a brief recap of its illustrious motorsport history. Cosworth took a Pinto block and chucked their entire engineering might behind the project, emerging a short while later with a turbocharged 2.0 DOHC that subsequently enabled the Group A Sierras to utterly dominate touring car racing for a good portion of the '80s. It is, in short, one of the best four cylinder engines ever built, and putting it in something like an Ascona B is a recipe for hilarity.

"I just wanted a way to get cheap, reliable power into the car," explains the car's owner and builder, Glenn Robinson when pressed about his choice of engine. "OK so a YB is more expensive than some engines, but it's certainly a lot more reasonable than a Millington Diamond."

SHELLING OUT

The Ascona part of the equation was something that Glenn had been working on for quite some time, right from the time he first set eyes on a 400R when he was just sixteen years old. A suitable car was eventually acquired but the work required to get it back on the road was slow and frustrating, taking many years and certainly testing his patience. Luckily salvation arrived in a rather unlikely fashion just over three years ago, when Glenn's friend and fellow Ascona nut Brian Murphy opted to sell his immaculate rolling shell for a very good price.

"He'd made sure the shell was in pretty much spotless condition, there really wasn't any welding that needed doing," explains Glenn. "He was only selling it as he'd been offered a genuine Ascona 400 and needed to find a way of financing it."

A suitable shell now sorted, Glenn began working on bagging himself a

TECH SPEC

ENGINE

1993cc DOHC 16v Cosworth YB with Group A head gasket, baffled sump, long studded 200 block, Green injectors, 3 bar map sensor, T34 roller bearing turbo, Swedish inlet plenum, aftermarket induction kit, black silicone hoses, alloy Group 4 radiator, Cosworth 4x4 FMIC, custom 2.5in stainless steel exhaust system, Magneti Marelli management

POWER

(Owner's estimate) 320bhp

TRANSMISSION

Custom transmission and diff tunnels, T5 five-speed gearbox, paddle clutch, custom two-piece propshaft, semi-floating Atlas axle with ZF LSD

SUSPENSION

Front: raised turrets, Avo adjustable dampers with uprated lowering springs, rose-jointed suspension arms, various polybushes, modified and strengthened crossmember, quick rack
Rear: Bilstein coilovers with 200lb springs, five-linked rear end, polybushes

BRAKES

Front: Alloy Ford hubs with Metro 6R4 four-pot calipers, AP Racing discs, aftermarket pads, braided brake lines

Rear: Alloy Ford hubs with Lotus Elise twin-pot calipers and vented and grooved discs, braided lines

WHEELS AND TYRES

9x15in Revolution Group 4 rally wheels in Ford 4x108 PCD, Dunlop tyres in various sizes

INTERIOR

Motordrive bucket seats, TRS multi-point harnesses, floor mounted pedal box, hydro handbrake, Corsa B PAS, circuit breakers used throughout, Lifeline 4 litre fire extinguisher system, Peltor intercom, motorsport wiring loom, ten point Safety Devices weld-in roll cage with diagonal rear and door bars, flocked dash, door and rear three-quarter cards, polycarbonate window kit with sliders

EXTERIOR

Opel Ascona two-door in Deutz tractor green, 400R kit from Smith and Deakin, fibreglass bonnet and boot lid

THANKS

My wife for her continued support and for putting up with the build, my good friends Brian and Iain for helping out with the build



"I JUST WANTED A WAY TO GET CHEAP, RELIABLE POWER INTO THE CAR"





It's a leftfield choice, but we have to admit it's a brilliant one



suitable YB lump, eventually managing to net an engine and T5 gearbox from a certain well known online auction site. Of course making the entire Ford drivetrain (including Atlas axle) from a late '80s Ford saloon fit a mid '80s Opel coupe took a fair bit of work and more than a little head scratching, and Glenn eventually sent the whole shell off to be professionally prepared and strengthened. The list of work undertaken was extensive and eventually ran to the diff and transmission tunnels (both needed to

be widened), the exhaust recesses, and the hard points for the imposing roll cage. You're probably spotting that, despite Glenn's original intentions, the Ascona was becoming more and more like a full-fat competition machine, something only accentuated when he had the rear end five-linked, the front suspension turrets raised for extra travel, and the front crossmember re-mounted and strengthened, just like on the original 400 WRC machines.

"It honestly was just going to be a straight up road car," explains Glenn

with a chuckle. "It only changed to a competition car with an MoT when I realised there'd be just no way I could really use it to its full potential anywhere on the public road, certainly not without losing my license!"

This slight shift in focus really did open up the floodgates for a barrage of motorsport orientated modifications, with the semi-floating axle treated to a ZF LSD and mated to the YB via a custom two piece prop, alloy (Ford) hubs, and some seriously impressive brakes. The fronts

ASCONA COSWORTH

Smith & Deakin 400R kit is the natural choice for an awesome rep



“I COULDN’T USE IT TO ITS FULL POTENTIAL ANYWHERE ON THE PUBLIC ROAD, CERTAINLY NOT WITHOUT LOSING MY LICENSE!”

feature four-pot AP Racing calipers that once saw active service on a Metro 6R4, plus the largest discs Glenn could convince to fit behind 15in wheels, with a similar (and equally capable) setup at the rear. As you might imagine, stopping is something that this Ascona does very well!

It’s also more than capable of handling itself on fast, flowing tarmac roads, with Glenn having taken care to fit a suitably sophisticated suspension set-up front and rear. The former now sports a matched set of adjustable dampers and lowering springs, plus rose-jointed suspension arms and various strengthening plates, while a peek under those bulging rear arches will reveal Bilstein coilovers with 200lb springs. It’s precisely the kind of setup that the likes of Bertie Fisher, Jimmy McRae and Ari Vatanen would’ve been able to use to full and spectacular effect, and a proven route to a finely balanced

Opel Ascona.

So, what about the nuts and bolts of that Cosworth motor then? Well even in a fairly mild state of tune the YB is a powerful engine and certainly capable of propelling a featherweight Ascona along at near comedic speeds, though this hasn’t prevented Glenn from adding some key tuning goodies along the way. Things like the Swedish inlet plenum, Green injectors and refurbished T34 turbo should be familiar to anyone who’s been fortunate to own a tuned Sierra Cosworth, and, though it has yet to be properly mapped, Glenn estimates that it’s presently making a very handy 320bhp.

KILLER KERMIT

In some respects it wouldn’t matter how much power the YB was making, it would still have to play second fiddle to how this particular Ascona looks – flipping angry! Yes all Ascona 400

replicas can’t help but look like they’re chewing half a hive of bees, but Glenn’s car looks even meaner thanks to that Kermit green paintwork.

“The vast majority of 400 replicas stick with white paint and Dealer Opel Team graphics, and yeah they look great, but I fancied something a little different for mine. The colour is actually from a Deutz tractor!”

Jump inside and it’s all very much as you’d expect from car like this; tough, firm bucket seats, loads of exposed metal, a fire extinguisher, gauges to keep a beady eye on how that Cossie lump is behaving, and that massive ten-point Safety Devices cage. It’s function over form in the truest sense and looks all the better for it. Glenn’s clearly got a keen eye for detail though, as of course it would’ve been easy enough to bolt in the key interior clobber and be done with it, but he’s instead gone further. The

Boot is as immaculately prepared as the rest of the car





What started out as a road car soon turned into this motorsport beast



OWNER
GLENN ROBINSON

AGE 28
OCCUPATION Computer Engineer/
farmer
FIRST OPEL It was an Ascona,
though the first one to actually see
the road was a Chevette saloon.
TOUGHEST PART OF THE BUILD
Weird as it sounds, it was actually
calling it a day - I spent so long
perfecting the car that it was a
relief to finally get in and drive it.
MOST REWARDING PART OF THE
BUILD The car's first outing at a
local festival of motorsport...that
single mile stage was probably one
of the best day's fun I've ever had!



ASCONA COSWORTH



We defy anyone to drive this Ascona on gravel and not 'light 'em up'!

It's all about the dish!



↙ flocked dash looks fantastic, yes, but it also helps that the door cards and rear quarter cards have been given the same treatment, and together they link the whole interior together and lift it far above the usual standard of club race and rally car cockpits.

HILL START

Glenn's only had the Ascona up and running for a few months and already he's started tweaking, adjusting and perfecting in an attempt to get it ready for a summer of competitive hill climbs and sprints. His decision to fit a YB means that he's been classed with some very potent machinery, with a host of big-power Escorts and bonkers single seaters all vying for their chance to take on the Ascona. This means that this year will be very much about getting to grips with the newly built car, finding and pushing its limits, then working out which direction to take it in long term, though of course Glenn already has a list of plans and ideas;

"I've just bought a Quaife 60G sequential gearbox for it, so that'll be good fun," he chuckles. "I'll see how it goes in the current class and may



convert it to natural aspiration for next year – who knows!"

One thing that's clear is that this Ascona really does benefit from being something of a hybrid of parts, and the whole car is proof (if indeed it were needed) that the mixing of Opel and Ford parts need not be a bad thing, and that sometimes it can result in something truly great. ○



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RETRO CARS LIVE

RETRO CARS LIVE IS AN ENTIRELY NEW EVENT CREATED BY THE SAME PEOPLE WHO PRODUCE OUR SISTER TITLE, *RETRO CARS*. THERE'S A HOST OF COOL THINGS TO DO BOTH ON AND OFF THE TRACK...

LIVE ACTION

Retro Cars Live, as the name suggests, won't just be a static car show – From drifting displays to a live restoration, your senses are in for a treat! The banked oval outer circuit at Rockingham will show off these amazing machines, and they've even got a Nascar display rumbling round at break-neck speeds, inches from the concrete wall! There's also the option to get on track and/or spectate during the frequent public track sessions that will see an array of retro rides being pushed hard on the inner National Circuit

FEATURE CAR PARADE

Feature cars from *Retro Cars* magazine from the past few years will be gathered in a dedicated paddock, plus there will also be an opportunity to see them out on track for a couple of demo runs.

RETRO DRIFT CHALLENGE

The Retro Drift Challenge is, as you'd expect, a drifting championship for pre-1989 cars with the main emphasis on keeping things cheap. This means limited tyre widths and very cool and close sliding action.

AUTOTEST

The Peterborough Motor Club will be holding an MSA regulated Autotest. Take to the specially built course to see if you can set the fastest time. A trophy is up for grabs for the winner too!

RATE MY RIDE

If you've got an amazing car then why not enter the Rate my Ride Competition? You could be in with

a chance of winning some great prizes and trophies, as well as displaying your car in the Rate my Ride paddock area. All types of cars/light commercials are welcome, whether it's an impeccably-detailed rebuild, quarter-mile demon or highly-tuned track weapon! Please note all cars must be pre 1995 to be able to enter.

CARS FOR SALE PADDOCK

In the cars for sale area you can display your car at the heart of the show for hundreds of show goers to see, making a sale almost inevitable! Costs £10 per car.

CLUB DISPLAYS

Make sure you save plenty of time to wander around the massive and diverse range of car clubs on display at Retro Cars Live. You can expect to see hundreds of cars filling every available inch



of the paddock, everything from immaculate restored motors to tuned performance classics. The show brings together the UK's finest club cars from all marques, groups, forums and even caters for kit cars!

RETAIL VILLAGE

Need a part for your car? Chances are that you'll find it within the Retro Cars Live Retail Village! Sandwiched between the track action and hundreds of club cars, the Retail Village is packed with everything and anything you could need for

your car, including new and used parts, accessories, clothing and much more.

VILLAGE GREEN

The Retro Cars Live Village Green is at the heart of the show. When you've made your way round the club displays or have had your fill of the track action, then why not head to the Village Green to relax and soak up the chilled atmosphere. The stage will host a packed timetable of interviews, talks and entertainment and will host the Award Ceremony at 4pm.

RETRO CARS LEGENDS

Don't miss Retro Cars Live: Legends! This will be a show-stopping collection of the very best models by era. Take a trip back through time to explore the heritage and private displays from the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. If it's rare, cool or



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**SUNDAY 9
AUGUST
ROCKINGHAM**



Fancy the chance to throw your retro Vauxhall around the Rockingham circuit?

significant to motoring, it'll be on display here.

RETRO CARS LIVE FEATURE PADDOCK

It's one thing to read about the cool machines we cover in the magazine, but it's quite another to see them up close. In our feature car paddock you can get up close and personal with many of our feature cars and their owners. Stand alongside the car that gave you inspiration or talk with an owner about how to overcome that tricky technical problem, or chat to our magazine staff about how to get your car in your favourite classic mag, it's all going on in the feature car paddock.

CAMPING

Why not make a weekend out of it and camp over? Camping is available on Saturday night, with dedicated public and club camping areas to choose from. Book in advance for just £7 per person or on the gate for £10, with access from 1pm.



There will undoubtedly be a great many cool Griffins on show

TO WWW.RETROCARS LIVE.CO.UK

GEAR

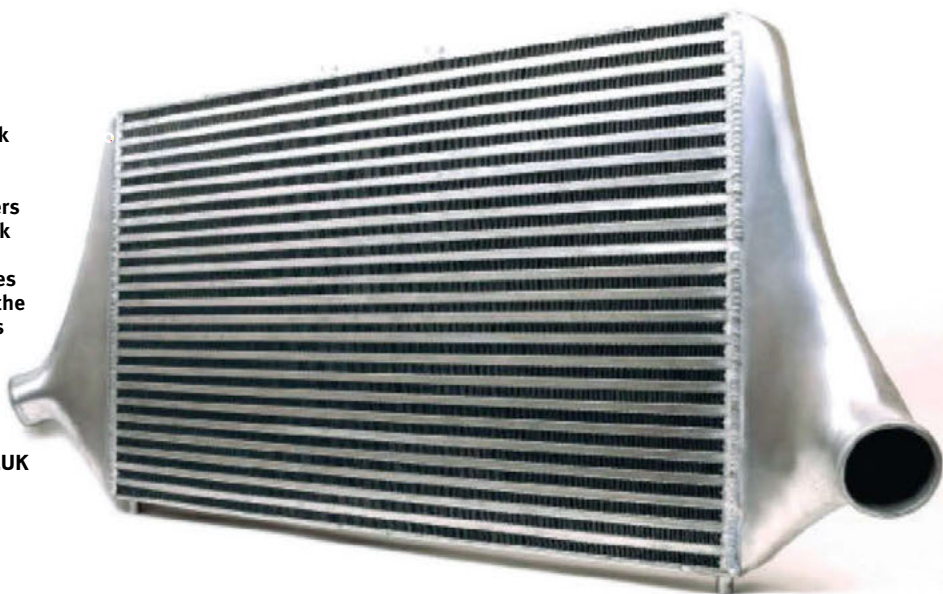
More great products and deals that we've tracked down for you.

ASTRA J INTERCOOLER

Forge Motorsport are renowned for their quality work and huge range of products. The latest item to come from their workshop is this front mount for all turbocharged Astra Js. They boast that the unit "offers independently-proven cooling capacity over the stock part – with commensurately impressive power and torque gains." It fits in the stock location and requires no modification to the radiator pack assembly, plus the kit also contains quality silicone hoses and stainless steel hoses clips to make for a simple and straightforward fitment. You can choose between natural alloy or the optional satin black OEM finish.

PRICE £891

CONTACT FORGE WWW.FORGEMOTORSPORT.CO.UK



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Looking for some bespoke two piece discs built to your specifications? Then you'll need to know about these from MTEC. They're manufactured in the UK, and each high grade cast iron disc is CNC machined before undergoing a thorough inspection process. Most discs have internal directional vanes, and are available in many popular styles; grooved, drilled, drilled and grooved, dimpled and grooved, and plain. MTEC can manufacture discs to your requirements, so check out their site, and even if you don't see your fitment listed, give them a shout.

CONTACT MTEC BRAKES 08004101910
WWW.MTECBRAKES.COM

CORSA E VAN SUSPENSION

Eibach are prolific when it comes to new fitments, and this is the latest addition to their huge range. Even the humble Corsa E van is now catered for! As ever there is a wide range of choices starting with the Pro-kit: 30mm lowering springs with rear springs designed to maintain ride quality whether empty or loaded. If you want to go a touch lower the Sportline kit offers a 40/30mm drop front/rear. To further compliment the look Pro-spacers are available from 5mm to 30mm per side.

PRICE PRO-KIT £164,
SPORTLINE £165, PRO-
SPACERS FROM £39 PER SIDE

CONTACT EIBACH 01455
28585 WWW.EIBACH.COM





VXR COBRA EXHAUST

The team at Cobra Sport have now developed a black tailpipe option for the Astra H VXR. This popular tip option is called the 'Blackout' and further enhances the cosmetics of the car without detracting from the original VXR tip design. The new design is available on their 3in turbo back and 2.5in cat-back systems. The usual Cobra Sport refinements come as standard, CNC mandrel bent tubing and precision TIG welding on all joints, with the entire system being hand finished, using grade 304 stainless steel throughout.

PRICE FROM £460.90

CONTACT 0114 244 7666
WWW.COBRASPORT.COM

TESTED



VALETPRO DRAGON'S BREATH

PRICE £9.99 (500ML) **CONTACT** WWW.VALETPRO.CO.UK

There's no denying that in our scene wheels are everything and it makes sense that you're going to want to keep them in tip-top condition. With that in mind it's worth knowing that the biggest killer of wheels (apart from the missus borrowing your car of course) is brake dust. Made up of a combination of metal particles, adhesive residues and carbon

fibres, brake dust is typically deposited on your wheels at high temperatures meaning it will soon eat into any protective coatings. Iron deposits can also oxidise causing corrosion along with the (often acidic) adhesives which will bond to anything in sight making it all pretty hard to shift. Leave it long enough and you'll not only lose those protective layers but the actual metal of the wheel will be compromised. Not great for structural integrity.

There is a solution and that's simply regular cleaning with a product that can dissolve the brake dust, along with any other salt and road grime you throw at it. ValetPRO reckon their Dragon's Breath is one of the best on the market to do just that, and it's also one of the easiest to use – let's find out if they're right.

TESTED

Technically speaking, although many outlets list it as a wheel

cleaner, Dragon's Breath is an iron and fallout remover meaning it's also safe for use on glass and paintwork. For the most part though, you'll be using this on your rims because that's where you'll find the majority of baked on corrosive deposits. They're arguably the hardest part of your car to clean and maintain too.

According to ValetPRO the idea here is to cause a chemical reaction forcing iron particles from their solid state into a liquid which can simply be wiped or rinsed off. Adhesive residues and other grime will also be removed with a minimum of effort and it's designed for use on all wheel finishes, even those of the chrome or polished variety.

VERDICT

The first thing you notice, it has to be said, is the pong – they got it spot on with the name, it really does smell awful. I like that premise though – to me that means no gimmicks.

It's a relatively thick clear gel

and that's also a good thing, it still gets into all the nooks but it's viscosity means it lingers on the wheel attacking the grime and brake dust rather than quickly running off all over the floor.

Best of all, it's bloody powerful, certainly more than you'd expect from a product you could be using on your paintjob. The wheels I used were pretty mucky and I was fully expecting to have to agitate the gel with a wheel brush (it even says in the instructions to do so if necessary). I didn't. Instead I just sprayed it on, waited for 5 minutes or so for the gel to react with the iron particles (turning a rather fetching shade of pinky/purple) and then rinsed it all off with a bucket of clean water. It literally ran off, all that was necessary was a quick wipe over at the end – hardly any effort at all. Very impressive.

IN A NUTSHELL: Powerful, no pressure washer needed, good value.

TESTED BY MIDGE



WORDS Jarkle PHOTOS Ade Brannan

different strokes

The UK boasts some massively powerful Corsa VXRs, but there's something very different about Ashley Conrad's example – read on to find out what...





FAST FACTS

- ★ Corsa VXR with Z18LER hybrid engine
- ★ Forged Wossner pistons and PEC rods
- ★ Gripper LSD
- ★ K-Sport big brake kit
- ★ Spax suspension



That's one tough looking VXR



OWNER ASHLEY CONRAD

AGE 20

OCCUPATION Sales Assistant

FIRST VAUXHALL This one
WORST PART OF THE BUILD The moment when it threw those rods!

BEST PART OF THE BUILD Knowing it's one of the only Corsas out there with an engine like this.

It's safe to say that Vauxhall timed the launch of the Corsa D VXR to perfection, coming hot on the heels of the Corsa C SRi and going up against the very well sorted Fiesta ST and all manner of offerings from various rival manufacturers. The baby VXR provided a much needed breath of fresh air for Vauxhall and allowed them to go toe-to-toe with the cream of the crop of the late noughties hot hatch sector, something that it did bloody well. Of course the car went on to be a huge success and continues to

be a much sought after car on the second hand market, something no doubt helped by the massive number of parts available for the VXR on the aftermarket tuning scene. Put simply, the Corsa VXR is the first step on the ladder of fast Vauxhall ownership for many, in much the same way as GSi badged Novas and Corsas were for countless others a few decades ago.

The UK certainly isn't short on tuned and tweaked VXRs then, and from appearances alone you could perhaps be forgiven for thinking that this particular example is nothing more

than a warmed over Corsa, certainly nothing especially groundbreaking. It's only when you learn that it's actually powered by a 1.8 engine that things begin to become clearer, though the various WG Motorworks stickers dotted about the car might also be something of a clue. It's owned by Ashley Conrad and before we get down to discussing the nuts and bolts of that engine setup, it's probably worth taking the time explain what happened to the car's original 1.6.

"I bought it as a totally standard car a few years ago," recalls Ashley. "It



“THE EXTRA TORQUE FROM THAT LONGER STROKE IS REALLY NOTICEABLE WHEN PUSHING ON”

didn't stay like that for long though, and within months I'd had it brought up to Stage 3 by a well known and supposedly reputable tuner.”

HYBRID HIJINKS

Can you see where this is heading? A little over three months after getting the Stage 3 car back home, the Z16LER decided it didn't fancy playing ball anymore and bent a pair of con rods, resulting in a very slow trip home and a despondent Ashley. This kind of experience would be enough to put many off modified Vauxhalls for good,

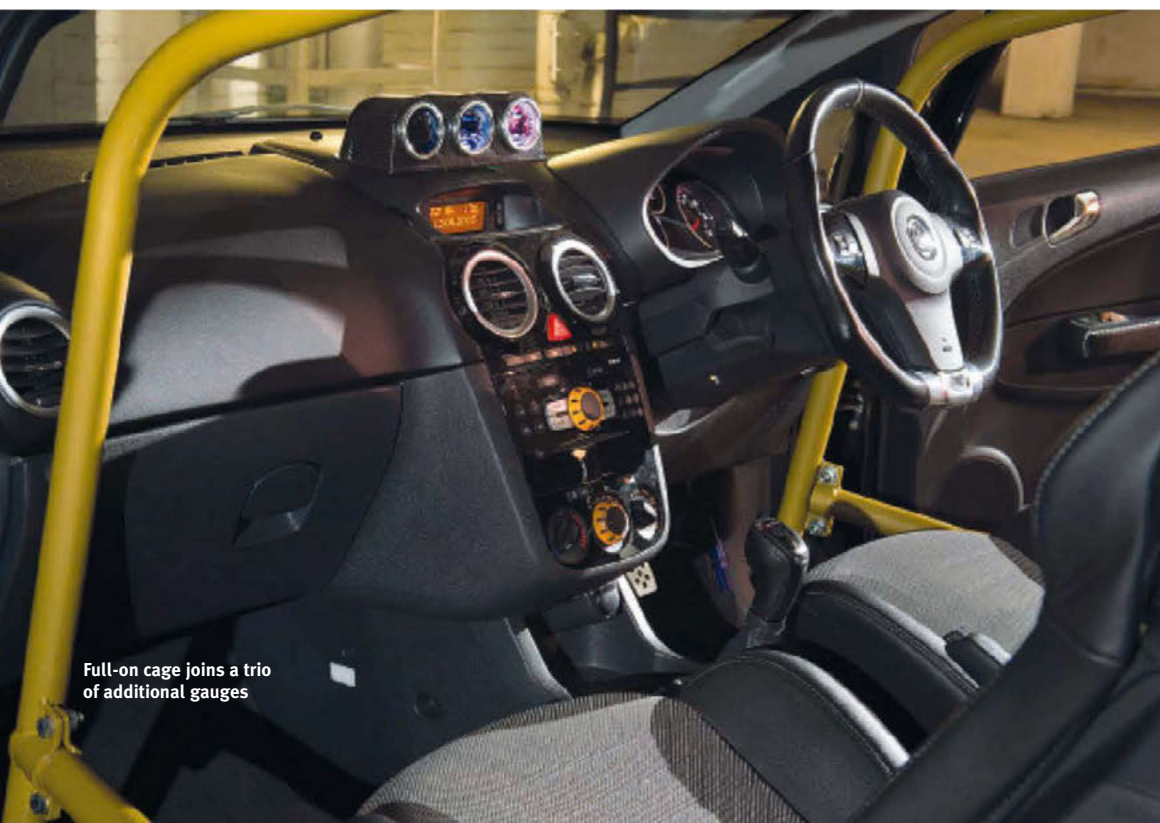
but not Ashley, who instead booked the car in to be inspected by Warren Greenland, the owner and chief spanner-wielder behind WG Motorworks. Various rebuild options were considered and discussed at length, including the 2.0 LEH from the Astra VXR, but the pair eventually opted to build a hybrid engine instead. The Corsa's Z16LER has a larger brother in the form of the Z18XER found in Astra Mk5s, and though there are certainly differences between the two, combining the head of the 1.6 with the block from the 1.8 is



CORSA VXR



This hybrid engine will soon be singing to the tune of 500bhp if Ashley has his way

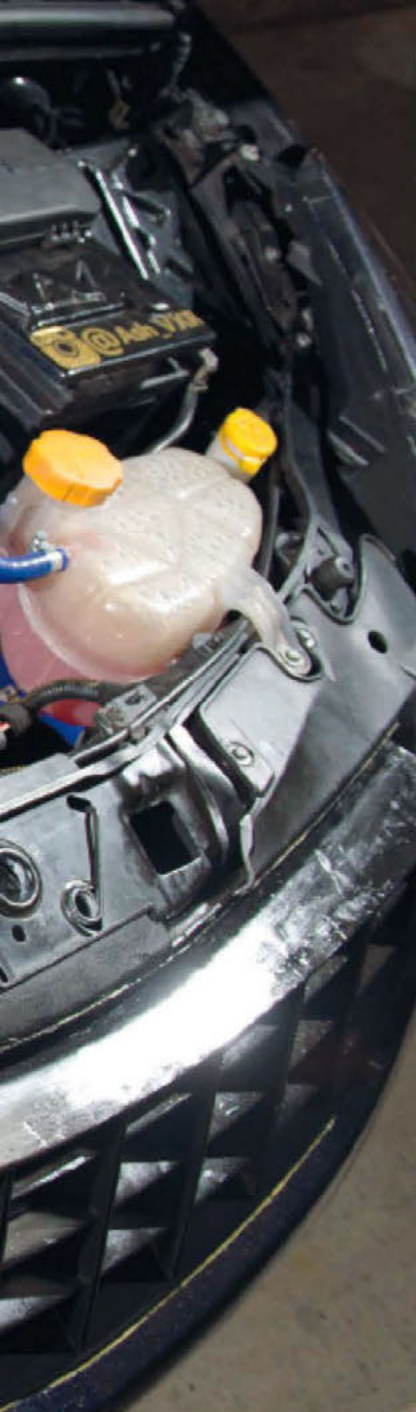


Full-on cage joins a trio of additional gauges

It's certainly possible. Doing this can leave you with an engine with lots of tuning potential and a significantly longer (89mm) stroke for less than a full-on Z20 conversion. The main expense in Ashley's case stemmed from the need to get a set of forged Wossner pistons into the block, plus the PEC rods and ARP bolts to ensure the whole setup remained as one assembly. The whole engine was treated to a myriad of high end tuning goodies at the same time, hence why it now boasts a pair of WGM Piper cams and double valve springs, a single mass flywheel, 3in turbo-back exhaust, Forge actuator and Airtec FMIC.

"It's currently running a base map from Rabbid Remaps so it's only making 250bhp or so, though I'm planning on swapping to a GT28 and Nortech manifold and pushing for 500bhp in the near future," explains Ashley with a grin.

Corsa VXRs are fine cars in their own right, but out and out handling prowess was never exactly their strongest suit in



TECH SPEC

ENGINE

Z18LER with Z18XER block and Corsa VXR Z16LER head, forged 79mm Wossner pistons, PEC rods, ARP rod bolts, billet crankshaft, WGM Piper cams with double valve springs, Astra VXR re-circulation valve, Forge actuator, Pipercross cone filter, Samco silicone hoses, 3in turbo-back exhaust system, Airtec FMIC, 395cc injectors, Rabbid Remaps base map (for now!)

POWER

250bhp (approx)

TRANSMISSION

M32 six-speed with Helix paddle clutch, single mass flywheel, Mtec short shifter, Gripper LSD

SUSPENSION

Spax uprated damper and spring kit, polybushed throughout

BRAKES

Front: K-Sport eight-pot calipers and discs, EBC Yellow Stuff pads, braided lines

Rear: Factory rear discs and calipers

WHEELS AND TYRES

Matt black 7x17in Team Dynamics Monza alloys, 225/45x17 Bridgestone tyres

INTERIOR

Bolt in half cage in gold, deleted rear bench and door cards, Recaro seats with four-point Securon harnesses, dash mounted boost, temp, and pressure gauges

EXTERIOR

Gloss black Corsa VXR with white and gold Airtec decals, de-badged front grille, DRL aftermarket headlights, Nurburgring front splitter, smoked rear lights and side repeaters, OPC foglight surrounds, RS bonnet vents

THANKS

Warren at WG Motorworks for all his hard work and expertise, Rabbid Remaps for the top-notch mapping



Recaros are as comfy and supportive as they look

“I’M PLANNING ON A GT28 AND NORTECH MANIFOLD AND PUSHING FOR 500BHP IN THE NEAR FUTURE”



factory form, hence why the likes of Quaife and Gripper do so well out of them! Ashley's car is no different and the transmission now runs a Gripper diff and Helix paddle clutch, both of which have so far been up to the task of dealing with that extra bhp, though of course driving a car of this size with that much power on tap is anything but relaxing.

TORQUE THE TORQUE

“It feels much like the Stage 3 1.6 at low revs and when driving around town, but the extra torque from that longer stroke is really noticeable when pushing on. The LSD has made a huge difference to the car as well, and I remember being amazed by the amount of grip available when Warren took me out for a test drive after he'd fitted it,” chuckles Ashley.

It helps that both the brakes and suspension have been given some aftermarket help, with the former now dominated by one of K-Sport's mammoth eight-pot front caliper





There's no missing the Airtec logos, that's for sure!



Big K Sport brakes will come in handy when WG dial in some more power

kits, plus EBC Yellow Stuff pads and braided lines. The rears remain as Vauxhall intended, but this is still a car that can easily haul itself to a halt at the drop of a hat. One of Spax's uprated damper and spring kits helps keep it in check through the corners, helped along by Team Dynamics Monza alloys with in 225/45x17 Bridgestone tyres.

Both interior and exterior changes have been kept to a minimum, partly in an attempt to lend the car an element of subtlety, partly because this is Ashley's daily driver and therefore needs to be at least vaguely user friendly! The inside is dominated by a four-point roll cage (hence the deleted rear bench) and various dials for keeping an eye on boost pressures, temperatures and fluid levels, while outside you can't fail to spot the mass of Airtec graphics, the RS bonnet vents and the splitter from a Nurburgring

Corsa. Ok so it isn't the most subtle Corsa around, but the vast majority of hardware fitted is there for a purpose – function over form.

GAME CHANGER

Clearly this is a car that's still very much in a state of flux; Ashley has all manner of plans for it and won't rest until it's making the kind of power figures that would make a Group B rally car blush, but it's already a deeply impressive bit of kit. This Corsa is more than just a collection of mind-bending numbers though, as it represents a different route to a big-power VXR, one that eschews the regular 1.6 and common 2.0 swaps and, we imagine, will only become more and more popular as the years roll by. Fancy getting a slice of this stroked 1.8 action? Then have a word with Warren, he'll have your Corsa making big numbers in no time at all. ○



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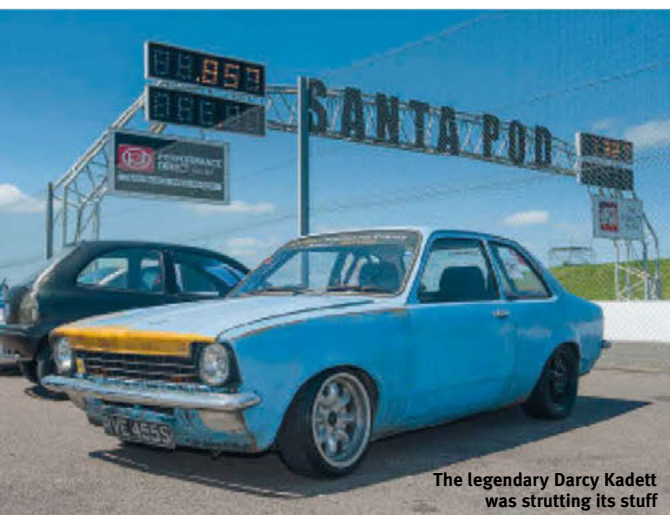


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PVS 2015



One of the many nutty drag Corsas ripping up the strip was Colin Rotheray's V6 beast



The legendary Darcy Kadett was strutting its stuff





PVS

THE PERFORMANCE
VAUXHALL SHOW

SHOW REPORT

The sound of big-power Redtop Corsas and screaming Astra VXRs can only mean one thing – PVS 2015 at Northamptonshire's legendary Santa Pod drag strip!

WORDS Jarkle PHOTOS Dan Sherwood

Santa Pod has been the home of UK drag racing for almost fifty years now, a span of time that's seen it play host to countless speed record attempts and flat out quarter-mile blasts. It even started its career as the home of the 92nd Bomber Group and their squadron fleet of B17 bombers, so it's probably fair to say that this unprepossessing looking strip of tarmac hidden in the middle of rural

Northamptonshire is no stranger to things with internal combustion engines doing speeds that border on the bonkers. That said,

even die hard 'Pod veterans were seen to raise an eyebrow and crack a grin at PVS this year, mainly because some of the times being set by the Vauxhall faithful really were astonishing. It helped that the weather decided to play ball of course, and the whole site was bathed in scorching sunshine throughout the day – perfect weather for record breaking quarter mile times, yes, but also fantastic news for those who just wanted to wander round and take in the sights, sounds and smells of the UK's premier Vauxhall show. Sit back, chill out, and prepare to relive what was undoubtedly one of the best shows of the year!

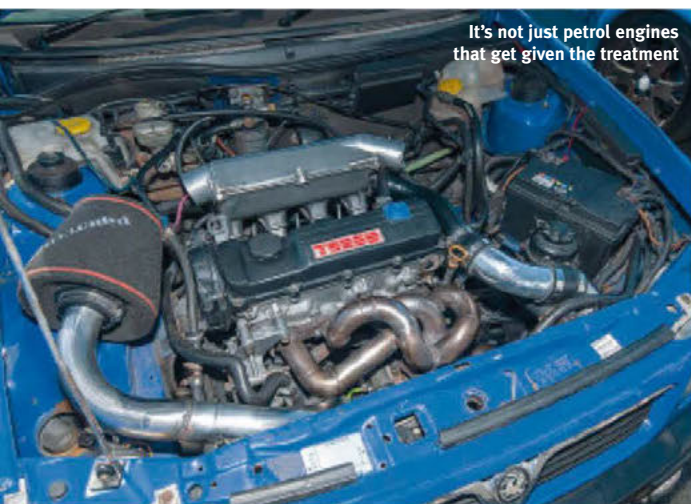


We were selling mags and some great subscription deals

ALAN DUTHIE'S RECORD BREAKING RUN

Allan Duthie's Corsa B turbo has been part of the furniture of the front wheel drive drag racing scene for years now, steadily getting faster and more uncompromising with each passing show season. He's long been among the very fastest Vauxhalls in the UK and this year, on the Sunday before PVS itself, Allan and the car achieved what they'd been threatening to do for ages and scooped the record for fastest street legal front wheel drive Vauxhall in the UK. The time he set was a staggering 9.82 with a terminal speed of 152mph – not bad for a twenty odd year old Vauxhall hatchback!

Allan wasn't alone in finding Santa Pod to his liking that weekend, as many of the Vauxhall Ten Of The Best brigade were in fine form and setting scorching times; Scott Carruthers managed a personal best of 11.6 in his box-fresh 1.6 Nova turbo, Colin Rotheray netted an impressive 11.4 with his V6 Corsa, and George Lockerby smashed his previous best with a stunning 10.2 at 150mph. Deeply, deeply impressive stuff from all concerned.



It's not just petrol engines that get given the treatment

The sun meant that the trackside grass bank was rammed with spectators all day

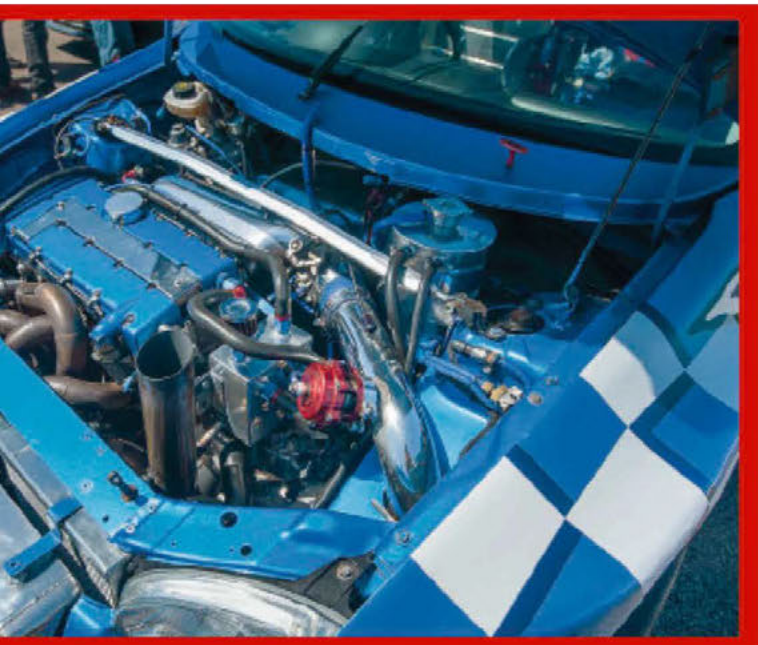


SCOTT CARRUTHERS NOVA 1.6 TURBO

Now we're well aware that Novas with turbocharged engines aren't exactly in short supply at Vauxhall shows, but this example is different in that it doesn't boast a C20LET or an LEH, Scott instead having opted for a carefully built C16XE turbo instead. Obviously converting a small capacity naturally aspirated engine to a big power turbocharged one has required a fair bit of effort on Scott's part, and the block now has custom 1mm oversized pistons with steel rods, an SBD oil pump and various other tweaks. Up top you'll now find a hefty Owen Developments HTA turbo, a Tial 50mm BOV and a 38mm external wastegate, plus all the other hardware essential on any front wheel drive drag racer. Power? Well it's currently making a strong 470bhp, though Scott has plans to push that up and past the 500bhp mark in the future, something that will no doubt help him in his quest to break into 10 second quarter mile times.

Scott set a new PB at 11.6secs!





SR20 powered Firenza is so cool
it hurts! Full feature coming soon



PVS 2015

The variety of cars being thrown up the strip is what makes PVS so special





Tough wheel
and tyre combo!



CLUB STANDS

Clubs and the stands that they put on are at the very heart of PVS – we know that without you guys we wouldn't have a show! The standard of club stands and displays continues to get better and better with each passing year, so picking an all out winner was, as ever, something of a challenge. The award eventually went to the Astra Owners Network and their amazing array of Astras of all generations and eras.



Jarkle would sell several parts
of his anatomy to own this!

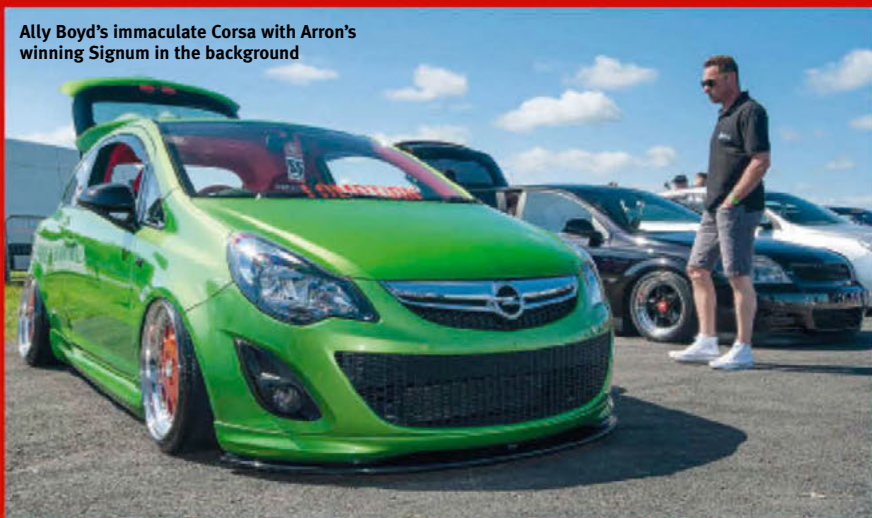


Ex-feature Astra still
looking mightily impressive

A V6 Tigra? Hell why not!



Ally Boyd's immaculate Corsa with Arron's
winning Signum in the background



SHOW AND SHINE

Stunning weather and spotless Vauxhalls are a timeless combination and one that was in full effect throughout the PVS weekend. The Show and Shine stand was rammed with well turned out griffins boasting all manner of engines, trims and wheels, though of course there could only ever be one winner – Aaron Taylor and his jaw-dropping Signum. This car has been around the Vauxhall scene for a

few years now, and has been scooping silverware left right and centre from the very beginning! We love the plush red leather interior, perfect black paint, tweaked V6 up front, and those gorgeous split rim alloys tucked under each arch. Yes it's a simple recipe, but it certainly works and this Signum's subtle appearance belies the amount of effort Aaron's put in over the last few years.

PVS 2015



Colin Rotheray has dared to be different with his V6 Corsa, and achieved a supremely respectable 11.4 as a result



Mk2 Cav was simply stunning, and sadly one of just a handful of Mk2s at the show



The UK's coolest Meriva?



JASON DARLING CHEVETTE TURBO

C'mon now, we were always going to fall for this pleasingly down at heel Chevette, weren't we? Jason was rarely off the strip on Sunday and his times began to plummet as the day wore on, eventually finishing with a 12.0 at 119mph – impressive times indeed. This is about as far from a stanced, unpractical 'scene' car as it's possible to get without leaving the Vauxhall world; yes it looks tough as hell on those Extreme Offset Wheels, but its primary purpose (and the theme that runs through almost every aspect of its build) is going stupidly fast and humbling VXR's! The source of all that shove is, you guessed it, a forged CzoLET, one that's had a massive GT30 slung over the side and a whole lot of internal tweaking along the way. Gear selection duties are covered by an E36 M3 six-speed, while a rock solid Reliant Scimitar rear end makes sure all that power reaches the tarmac in a useable fashion. Old school cool in its purist form, and all the better for it.





THE HANDLING CHALLENGE

PVS isn't just about straight-up quarter-mile blasts and show stands, there's also the ever popular handling challenge. The course could be found at the very top of the Santa Pod strip itself, just before the hard standing gave way to the grass and right in among some of the largest and most impressive club

stands. All manner of Vauxhalls with a myriad of different drivetrains and engines could be seen powering round the tight, technical circuit throughout the day, but in the end the overall honors went to Lee DeCiantis and his utterly evil looking VX220. A worthy winner and a mightily impressive car!



Jason on his way to a 12 second quarter

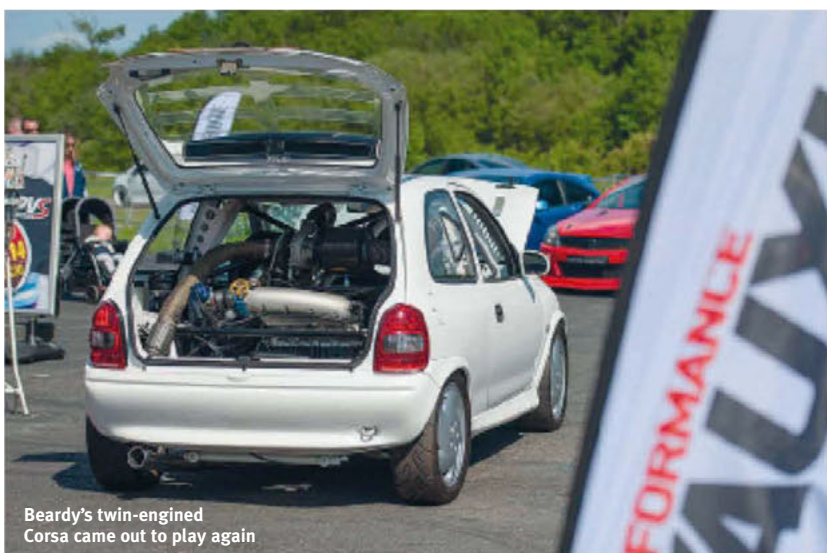
AARON MCCANN ZAFIRA VXR

This particular Zafira VXR was tough to miss, partly because it was running retina-scorching red alloys, but mainly because it was popping, banging and making the kind of noises normally associated with big-power hatchbacks and fully paid up track cars! A chat to its owner, Aaron McCann, soon revealed why, with the Zafira's LEH now boasting 87mm

PEC pistons, I-beam rods, Klassen cams, a Nortech manifold and a GT2871R turbo. A Quaife diff does its best to put the resulting 430bhp to the front wheels in an even, useable manner, but you still get the impression that this is a real hooligan of a car – and all the better for it! Subtle? Not a chance. Pleasantly bonkers? Absolutely!



What would you call this, a Tigran?



Beardy's twin-engined Corsa came out to play again

Check out www.facebook.com/beatcancercavalier





A nutty Nova in its natural habitat



People were dying to get a passenger ride in this Omega!



Yup, that's pretty bonkers!



DANNY WILSON AND BRIAN BAYBUTT CORSA B

Long term show-goers may well recognise the basic outline of this Corsa B from previous runnings of PVS, as the car has been something of a fixture of the scene for the last few years. Evidently its owner, Danny Wilson grew tired of his car's front wheel drive underpinnings and decided to do something about it, hence why the Corsa now sports the drivetrain from a 2.5 V6 Omega! Helped along by good friend Brian, Danny really has created something rather special here, though he does admit that the genesis of the entire build was a drunken bet with friends, much like Tony Stoye's rear wheel drive Corsa from a few years ago. That V6 didn't want to fit into its new home without a fight, hence why the pair have had to carry out some rather drastic bonnet surgery in order to make it clear, plus some rather extreme arches to accommodate the Omega's vastly different track. Proof once again that the UK Vauxhall community is nothing if not inventive.

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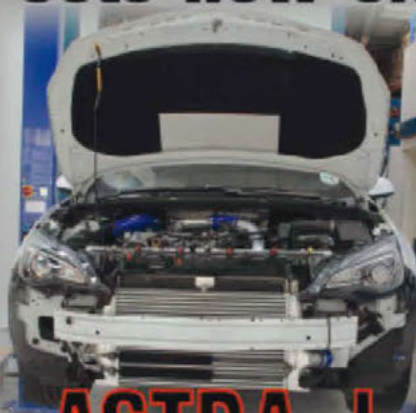
TIME ATTACK

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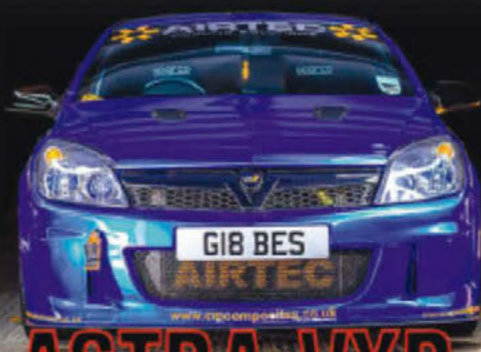
VXR



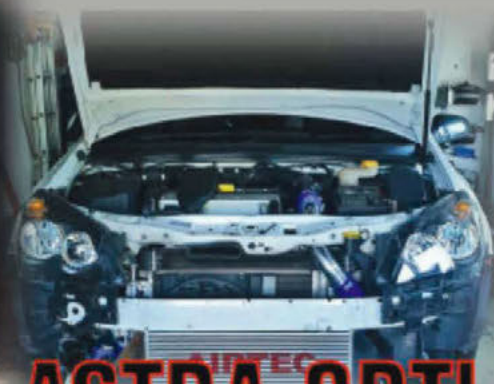
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CAVALIER SRi

HIDDEN TREASURE



Kirk McSporran's mint Mk3 Cavalier might look like a standard SRi sitting on a nice set of wheels, but this Diamond Black beauty is packing a 250bhp Saab-sourced powertrain...

WORDS Dan Furr PHOTOS Dan Sherwood

When it comes to personalising your car, there's every chance that you'll want to make a bold statement that ensures your pride and joy stands out in a crowd. Bodywork adornments, interior refurbishments and massive wheels wrapped in ribbons of rubber are commonplace purchases for those

hoping to set their car apart from the rest, but there's also something to be said for adopting an approach that results in an OEM+ look designed to deflect attention away from what lies within.

Kirk McSporran's pre-facelift Mk3 Cavalier SRi is an excellent example of the 'less is more' ethos. "I've never really been a fan of outlandish body kits and over-the-top cosmetic alterations," says the 28-year-



FAST FACTS

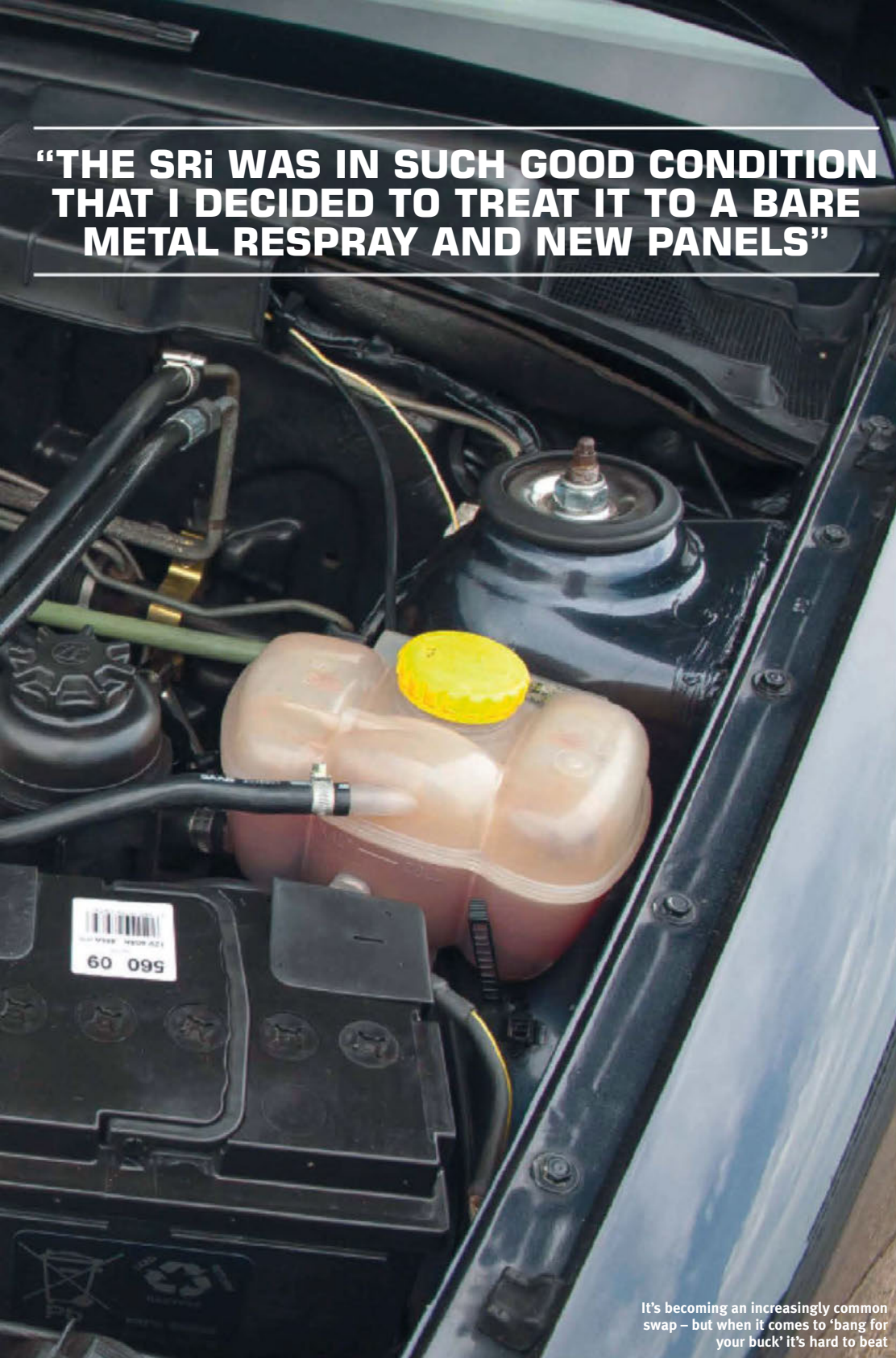
- ◆ Stage 3 250bhp Saab B204R
- ◆ FM54 501 gearbox
- ◆ Spax coilovers
- ◆ Speedline Corse alloys
- ◆ AP Racing ST200 four-pot brakes



CAVALIER SRI



“THE SRi WAS IN SUCH GOOD CONDITION THAT I DECIDED TO TREAT IT TO A BARE METAL RESPRAY AND NEW PANELS”



It's becoming an increasingly common swap – but when it comes to ‘bang for your buck’ it's hard to beat

old HGV driver. “I like sleepers that wear updates that only those with knowledge of the model in question would be able to identify. I suppose you could say that I don't really like to draw attention to myself or to my cars!” he laughs.

As if to prove the point, Mr McSporran tells us about a 1.2-litre Nova that he used to own. “I added a GSi styling package, but that's as far as I was prepared to take the car's appearance,” he confirms. Surprisingly, other than a media-blasted Nova shell that has been sitting atop axle stands in a storage unit in deepest, darkest Leicestershire for the past eight years,

the GSi replica and the Cavalier are the only four-wheelers that Kirk has ever owned! Perhaps less really is more?! Either way, we ask him to enlighten us with regard to his SRi's early history.

“It belonged to an elderly farmer in Oxfordshire,” replies our man from Barwell. “The car had been in the custody of the same family for most of its life, and it had never been toyed with. Even its original SRi hubcaps were sitting pretty in each corner when I scrawled my name on its logbook!” he smiles.

The special edition saloon was supposed to be Kirk's runabout while he restored the blasted Nova to its

former glory, but as is the case with so many petrolheads that find themselves behind the wheel of a Mk3 Cavalier, he quickly fell in love with the classic Vauxhall. In fact, he was so smitten with his new motor that plans to restore the Nova have been on hold ever since!

STRIP CLUB

“The SRi was in such good condition that I decided to treat it to a bare metal respray and new body panels,” he continues. “I stripped the car free of its doors, bonnet, boot lid, bumpers, side skirts, spoiler and interior before removing its two-litre

TECH SPEC

ENGINE

1985cc B204 16-valve turbo, TD04 hybrid turbocharger with GT28 internals, Forge Motorsport actuator, enlarged intercooler, Saab intercooler pipework, 3-bar MAP sensor, Nigel Pumford Stage 3 map on Saab ECU, Siemens 650cc fuel injectors, Walbro 255 fuel pump, bespoke radiator, twin slimline fans, Saab airbox, heat-wrapped 3in stainless steel turbo-back exhaust system, braided oil lines with AN10 hose fittings, enlarged oil cooler

POWER

250bhp (estimated)

TRANSMISSION

Front-wheel drive, FM54 501 five-speed manual gearbox painted silver, Saab gear linkage, Viggen clutch

SUSPENSION

Spax RSX coilovers, 40mm lowered ride height, Saab subframe and rear beam powdercoated black, Saab front control arms powdercoated yellow, anti-roll bars powdercoated red, Saab drop links, Saab steering rack linkage, polished top mounts, new standard bushes throughout

BRAKES

Refurbished AP Racing Vectra ST200 four-piston front calipers painted red, Compbrake bias pedal box and twin master cylinders, EBC Greenstuff pads, hydraulic handbrake, braided lines and hoses

WHEELS & TYRES

7x17in Speedline Corse wheels powdercoated silver, 40mm stud and nut conversion, Falken 205/45x17 tyres

BODY

1991 Mk3 Cavalier SRi saloon, full respray in Diamond Black, new sills and rear wheel arches, Waxoyl application throughout (doors, sills, boot, various cavities), tinted personalised registration plates, all new red SRi graphics, GSi2000 rear lights, front fog light deletion, wind deflectors

INTERIOR

Replacement factory upholstery, Recaro badges fitted to front seats, leather driver's seat bolster, original cream plastics, tailored Vauxhall floor mats, extra gauges (oil pressure, water temperature, boost) in custom mount beneath headunit, Mk2 Astra GTE three-spoke leather steering wheel, onboard fire extinguisher, adjustable brake bias controller beneath steering column, Pioneer headunit, Infinity 6x9in speakers and mids

THANKS

My parents and extended family, PR Developments for helping me to fit the engine (and for assisting me with the wiring!), and a big thanks to Craig and Bray for painting the car.

CAVALIER SRI

Super clean interior shows how well Kirk looks after his Cav



Speedlines and APs – a winning formula

SEH engine and F16 manual transmission. The rolling shell was wheeled into a pal's bodyshop for a fresh lick of paint a short while later, and I ensured that the car's rear wheel arches were replaced with new metal at the same time," he adds.

Lifting a lump out of an engine bay provides the perfect opportunity to evaluate the condition and performance of a car's beating heart, and it was with this in mind that Kirk began to question the abilities of the aging eight-valver that had been powering his SRi up until that point. He was also egged-on by the fact that the owner of every other vintage Vauxhall that he came across seemed to be in the process of equipping his or her great Griffin with a turbocharged engine from the Saab stable.

SWEDE SUCCESS

The B204R is by far and away the most popular Swedish powerplant to find itself sat beneath the bonnet of a Vauxhall; we've featured loads of Novas, Vectras and Astras that are being propelled by the Scandinavian two-litre unit! With plenty of ponies promised for paltry pennies (when compared to the cost of acquiring a decent CzoLET), it's easy to see why so many owners are opting for nuts and bolts from ABBA's homeland.

"Mates were telling me that I'd never go ahead with the swap," explains Kirk. "I proved them wrong when I bought a complete Saab 900SE convertible and removed its engine! I also took the car's turbo, subframe, boost pipes and

wiring loom before weighing in the leftover parts," he says.

Fitting the B204R to a nineties Vauxhall is a straightforward enough job thanks to similarities between the chassis configurations and floor pan designs of European GM cars in that period. This meant that Kirk was able to equip his SRi with its new guts by using the 900's subframe and offside engine mount. The Cavalier's F16 gearbox attached itself to the new engine without complaint – retaining its factory mounts – and MIGweb regular, Nigel Pumford, unlocked the Swede's ECU before programming it with a Stage 2 map.

"There were a few teething



OWNER KIRK MCSPORRAN

AGE 28
JOB HGV driver
FIRST VAUXHALL A 12-litre Nova that I turned into a GSi replica
FAVOURITE VAUXHALL Chevette HSR
BEST THING ABOUT THE CAR The brakes are awesome



“MATES WERE TELLING ME THAT I'D NEVER GO AHEAD WITH THE SWAP... I PROVED THEM WRONG”



The Cav's subtlety belies the fact that it's got a stomping swede under the bonnet



problems when I tried to get the car up and running again, but most of the issues that I faced were to do with the Cavalier's clocks having difficulty working with the Saab brain," recalls Kirk. "Once resolved, I added an enlarged intercooler to the car's engine bay, and I bought a set of Cavalier Turbo fanblade alloy wheels that were promptly painted black," he says.

POWER HUNGRY

Spax coilovers and all new suspension bushes followed, but keen to find out what more the B204R could offer, Kirk asked Nigel to update his car's ECU with a Stage 3 map. Following its earlier 'bedding in' period, the engine itself was removed and refreshed with a timing chain and all new gaskets, and Kirk took the time to improve upon the B204R's original specification by adding Siemens 650cc fuel injectors, a TDO4 hybrid turbocharger and a Forge Motorsport actuator. A high-flow fuel pump, an enlarged radiator and a heat-wrapped, turbo-back, 3in stainless steel exhaust system have also joined the party, while an enlarged oil cooler is fed by hefty braided lines topped



with AN10 fittings.

The 250bhp figure that Kirk's SRI is estimated to be producing is likely to increase as engine development work continues. With that in mind, a set of Vectra ST200 AP Racing four-pot anchors have been installed in an effort to halt the cool Cavalier with as much urgency as it displays under acceleration. A Compbrake brake bias pedal box kit with twin master



cylinders, a hydraulic handbrake conversion and EBC Greenstuff pads also bolster the car's stopping power.

Unlike the majority of owners in possession of a Saab-powered Vauxhall, Kirk went on to mate his car's B204R to a Swedish gearbox. "I didn't want my Mk3's transmission to become its Achilles' heel during my quest for more horsepower. I briefly considered the purchase of a Cavalier Turbo F28

six-speed, but the 900's five-speed FM54 501 is just as strong and more readily available. It also features a superior linkage, and I was able to find a low mileage example complete with a Vigen performance clutch," he beams.

The SRI's interior is a largely standard affair, with the only telltale sign that all is not as it seems being a trio of gauges that monitor engine operating conditions in their custom lower dash housing. Kirk has managed to resist the temptation to fit facelift black plastics and leather in favour of keeping his car's original grey trim and cloth, although a three-spoke steering wheel sourced from a Mk2 Astra GTE does its best to spice up the cabin.

Similarly, the car's exterior leaves little to indicate how much work has gone into this tastefully executed restomod project. Of course, the Mk3 Cavalier buffs among you will have spotted the GSi2000 taillights and the inclusion of red replacement decals, but even the car's powdercoated Speedline Corse 17s look as though they could have been a factory option. And therein lies the beauty of Kirk's magnificent Mk3 – no fuss, OEM+! ○

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READER RESTO

Jonathan Flynn from County Mayo guides us through his Nova SR saloon's rebirth...

A few years ago my brother bought his first Nova. He bought it to 'do up' and I helped him along the way. I always promised myself that as soon as I got my driving licence I'd get my own Nova to restore.

When I eventually got my licence I spent over two years looking for a suitable project as they were either too far gone, too far away, or too expensive. But in April 2014 my luck changed, and I found not one, but two hatchback Novas and one Nova saloon that had been pretty much abandoned in a

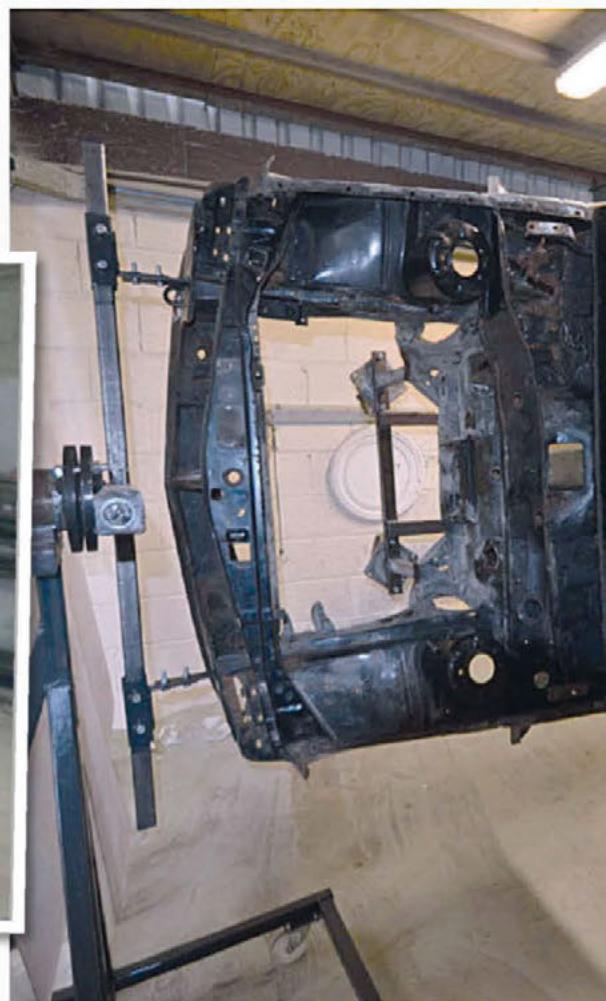
ditch for the best part of 10 years.

Of the hatchbacks, one was a 1989 1.3SR and the other a 1990 Mk1. The oldest of the bunch was the saloon which was first registered in 1983, so was one of the first Novas on the road. They all looked to be in poor condition but I decided it was worth the risk. I took them home, cleaned them up and discovered that the 1.3SR was way too far gone to be restored, so I decided to focus on the saloon (mainly because of their rarity in the West of Ireland). It was

going to take a lot of work, but I got stuck in and within a couple of days had it totally stripped. It was then time to get it all shot blasted and see what I was left of it! It took a lot of welding and new panels. I set myself a deadline and stuck to it.

Using the 1.3SR running gear and interior, I turned the saloon into an SR. The whole thing took just over 14 months from start to finish and I couldn't have completed it without the help of my brother Andrew Flynn and our little boss man Ryan Flynn.

I I heard about a bloke who was meant to have a few Novas lying around that were for sale, so I went to visit him. When I got there I found this 1983 saloon parked up in a ditch.



4 At the same time I pulled the SR into the shed and started to strip it out. I'd decided to make the saloon into an SR replica, so the plan was to take as much off the hatch as I could, and fit it to the saloon.



2 Parked beside it was a 1989 1.3SR, so I decided to buy both! When I got home and washed the moss off I found that the SR Nova was way too far gone to restore.



3 But the saloon was salvageable. When I stripped it down I found a good bit of rust, so I made the decision to get it shot blasted.



5 I made up a spit and mounted the saloon to it. This made the job much easier and I could get to work stripping the under-body sealant.



6 The bottom of the car at this stage looked to be in very good shape.



7 Now it was time to really find out how good the shell was – it was time for shot blasting.



8 Once shot blasted I applied a coat of etch primer. At this stage I could clearly see what I needed to replace: front panel, back panel, both sills, both 'pockets' at the rear of wheel arches, battery tray, rear arches and the scuttle panel!



9 This is what I was left with. The battery tray was the worst I have ever seen.

READER RESTO



10 It was not going to be nice job but I cracked out the grinder one evening and chopped it all out. This then made the replacement battery tray much easier to work with and do a neat job of it.



16 Then it was a case of rebuilding the car, and getting the exterior in paint. The sideskirts were originally painted red by accident, but I had them done again, but in black. I was very happy with the result.



11 I removed the scuttle panel from the donor car and welded it in place. The original one was full of pin holes after being shot blasted.



12 I could then fit the new panels, and new GM wings. Trying to get everything to line up 100% was hard and took a lot of time.



17 I couldn't fit the SR trim around the rear side windows as it's a different shape on the saloon so I sprayed them and came out very well.



18 With help from brother Andrew we stripped the 1.3SR and gave it a full rebuild. We left the standard cams, but put twin 40s on it. It's now putting out around 90bhp, but I plan to go for more soon.



20 Here's the finished product at my first car show of the year!





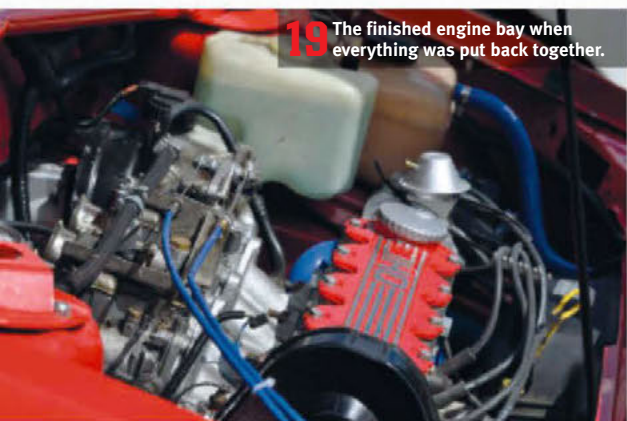
13 At this stage I had a very hard job removing and fitting the new GM rear panel without doing any damage to the quarter panels. I also removed the rotten 'pockets' and made new ones as I couldn't find replacements anywhere. New sills were also fitted at this stage.



14 With the bodywork complete it was time for paint! So off came the panels and everything was primed then given the first coat of Flame Red.



15 With the engine bay all painted we moved on to the interior and the boot. No half measures, I wanted this done properly!



19 The finished engine bay when everything was put back together.



WANT TO BE FEATURED?

We'd love to hear about your resto story, so if you've got some good pictures of your build then feel free to get in touch at: performancevauxhall@kelsey.co.uk, and if you've got a mate who deserves credit for their hard work, point them in our direction too!



21 The Flame Red really comes up well after a good polish, definitely the right choice of colour on this car.



22 It always puts a smile on my face! All the hard work I put into the car in just over 14 months has really paid off. The joy I get out of just hopping into the car on the weekend and going out for a spin is just brilliant!

CORSA C

REINVENTION

Not many Corsa Cs have as much time, care, attention, and money lavished upon them as this one. Though one look should be enough to tell you that it was more than worth the expense!

PHOTOS Steve McCann





FAST FACTS

- ★ Corsa C in VW L87 Pearl White
- ★ Z18XE transplant with Dbilas Flowmaster induction kit
- ★ Rays Engineering alloy wheels
- ★ Universal coilover air bag front suspension
- ★ Custom boot build

CORSA C

We've been making this magazine long enough to notice a few well worn and often repeated themes in the world of

modified Vauxhalls. Nova owners are a tight knit bunch with something of a jungle and garage addiction (not that that's in any way a bad thing of course), Zafira owners love nothing more than to christen their cars 'The Boost Bus,' and, perhaps the most commonly seen trait, Corsa owners don't stay Corsa owners for very long. Let us explain; there's no doubting that the Corsa B, C, D and no doubt the E, are fun, cheap and tunable little cars, but the people who tune them tend to reach a certain stage before departing Corsa ownership for good, more often than not forsaking Vauxhalls for something big and powerful that originated in the land of the rising sun. Again, that's not exactly an issue, but it does mean that when you do spot a Corsa owner who is truly dedicated to the car and the scene in general, then it's all the more obvious and heartening.

Sean Mooney fits the bill nicely, having owned a string of Corsa Bs and Cs in his time, with this particular example being his first car. Those of you with particularly good memories may well recall that we featured this very car back in 2010, though you'd be forgiven for not realising it was the same car, back then it was red and boasted mirror polished Porsche alloy wheels.

"After the feature I wasn't really sure what to do – I mean the car was pretty much finished by that point," recalls Sean. "I ended up buying a house and concentrating on my career for a few years, but I didn't sell the Corsa, it was just laid up for a while."

It took about twelve months for the sight of the Corsa in a sad state of

A phenomenal amount of work has clearly gone into the interior



OWNER
SEAN MOONEY

AGE 28
OCCUPATION Health and Safety Manager

FIRST VAUXHALL This one!
TOUGHEST PART OF THE BUILD Trying to put the whole car back together properly – it was a challenge even after I'd spent so long bagging and labelling everything!

BEST PART OF THE BUILD The little details that not everyone notices, like the extended splitter and the one off wing mirrors.





Just check out the details, and the quality of the finish

hibernation to become too much for Sean to bear, and he eventually decided to get re-aquainted with it and to commence a complete, nut and bolt rebuild. It didn't take long for him to disassemble the car, taking care to carefully bag and label every part along the way. Suspension arms, hubs, brackets, subframe and the rear beam were then sent off to be powder coated and painted, while Sean set to work determining what engine he wanted to

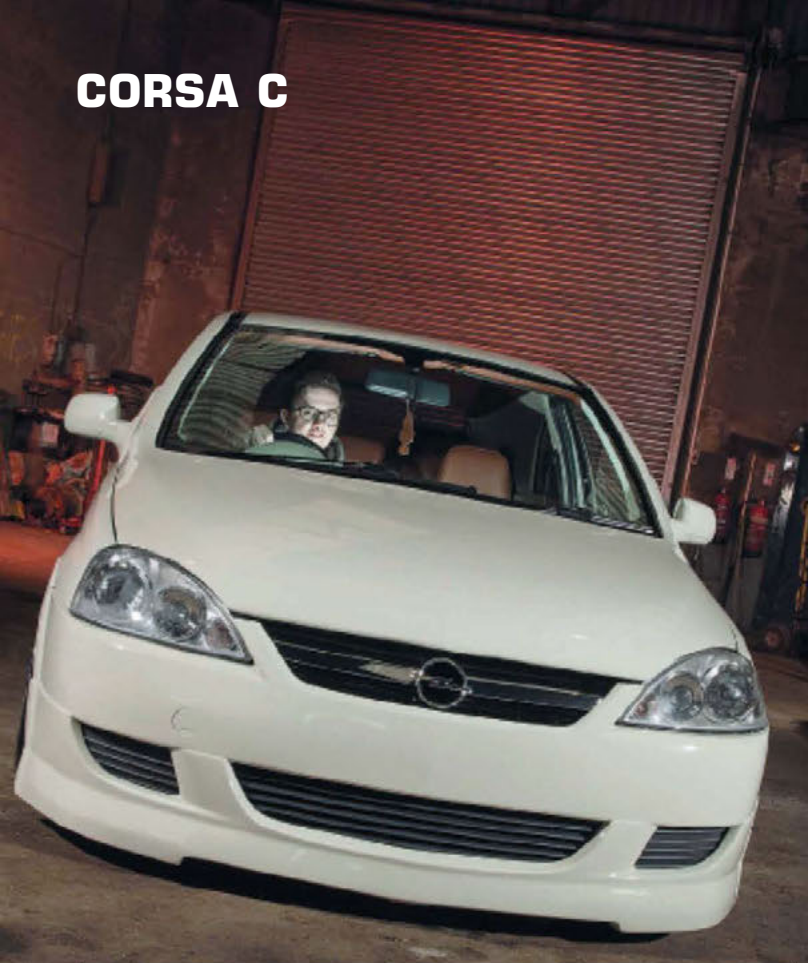
fit and what shade he wanted the finished car.

BUSINESS PLAN

Most people tend to build cars on something of a whim; they get stuck in, pick the key parts that take their fancy and that they can afford, and a project car slowly emerges. That's completely at odds with Sean's approach, as he actually sat down a drew up a comprehensive, highly detailed



There's no denying this is a seriously well thought-out build



**"I KNEW FROM THE START
I'D BE SWAPPING THE 1.2 FOR
SOMETHING MORE POWERFUL"**



Rays wheels are awesome to look at.
Not so much fun to clean though!

TECH SPEC

ENGINE

Z18XE with 4-1 Piper exhaust manifold and stainless steel system with sports cat, Dbilas Flowmaster induction kit, K&N filter, custom coil pack cover, custom manifold cover

POWER

145bhp (claimed)

TRANSMISSION

Factory F17 five speed and clutch

SUSPENSION

Front: TA Technix coilovers converted to universal coilover air bags, hardlines, stainless steel 5l air tank mounted in custom boot build
Rear: Custom 120mm lowering springs, factory dampers

BRAKES

Front: Mintex 308mm front discs and pads
Rear: Factory disc setup

WHEELS AND TYRES

7x16in Rays Engineering Superfine mesh alloys re-drilled to 4x100 PCD, 5mm front spacers, 10mm rear spacers, 165/40x16 Nankang tyres

INTERIOR

Porsche 'tombstone' seats in tan leather, door cards, gaiters, headlining and boot build trimmed in tan leather, custom fit cream carpet and floor mats, OMP steering wheel, Isotta handbrake cover, Richbrook gear knob, Corsa D rear headrests, retro-fitted electric windows, custom monitors in front console and rear boot lid, Smiths volt meter and dual needle air gauge, custom boot install with hardlines for air ride

ICE

Alpine headunit IDAx001, Alpine speakers front and rear, media player hooked up to 2 Directed monitors

EXTERIOR

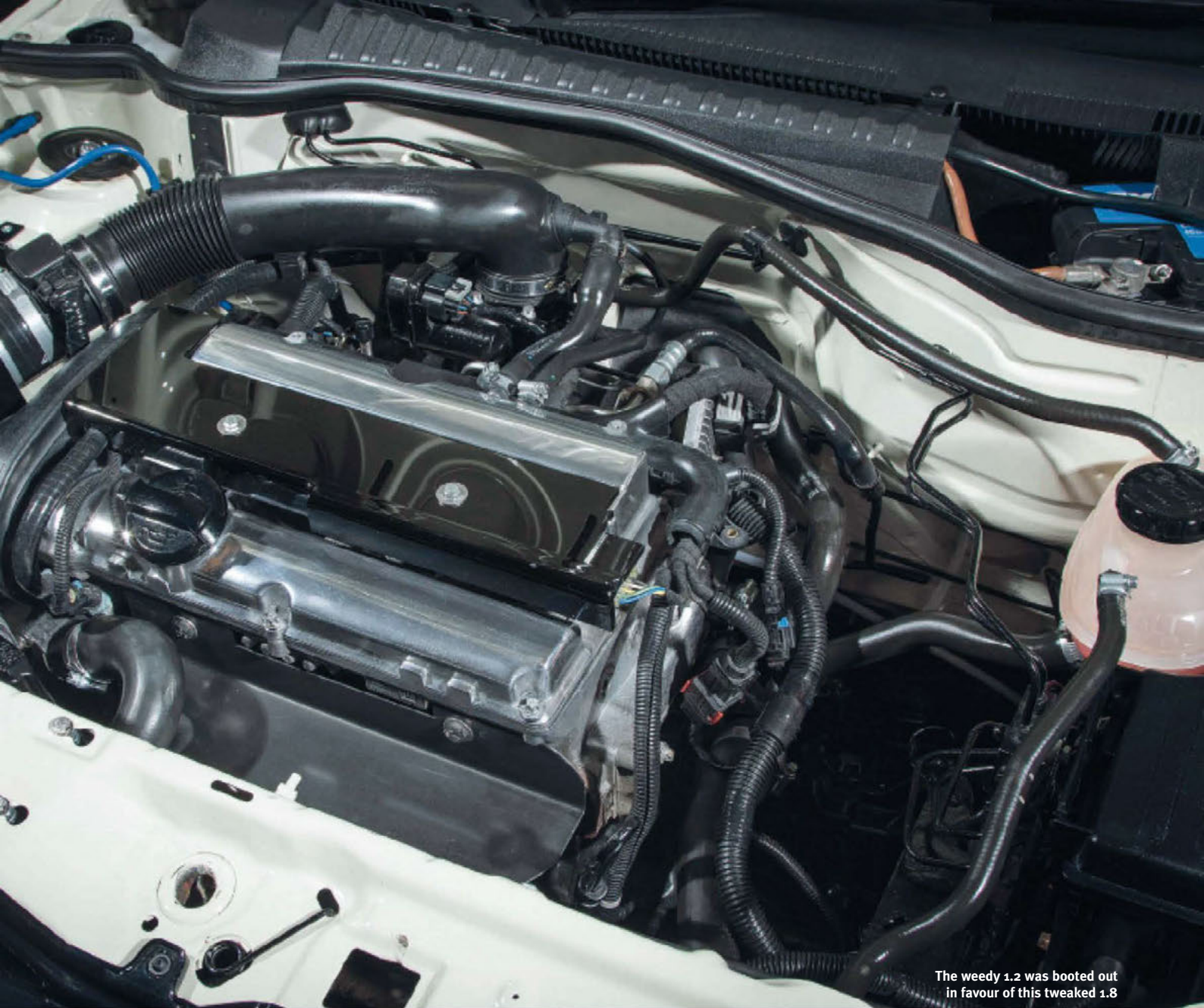
Corsa C in VW L87 Pearl White with genuine Opel bumper, fully smoothed grille, Irmischer front splitter extended by 25mm, smoothed rear bumper, Steinmetz sideskirts, custom made 6N2 VW Polo mirrors, underside stripped and painted in black, Fiat Barchetta door handles

THANKS

The Future Mrs Mooney for putting up with the build for so long, Haugheys for doing all the paintwork, and all the lads on Corsa C UK for their help and advice.



Some of you will love this pic, some will absolutely hate it!



The weedy 1.2 was booted out in favour of this tweaked 1.8

plan of attack before he'd so much as lifted a spanner.

"I like to know how I'm going to approach things before I start, so I knew from the beginning that I'd be swapping the 1.2 16v for something more powerful and that the red bodywork would change."

ZLET conversions were weighed up but eventually discounted on the grounds of cost, Sean eventually opting to buy a complete 1.8 package from a Corsa SRI. Transplanting this clean, low mileage unit into another Corsa C wasn't much of an issue and Sean soon found himself trial fitting a number of performance goodies, including a 4-1 Piper exhaust system and Dbilas Flowmaster induction kit. This done, the engine and transmission were pulled out once again so the shell could be properly prepared and painted – though Sean still had no real idea what colour it was going to go!

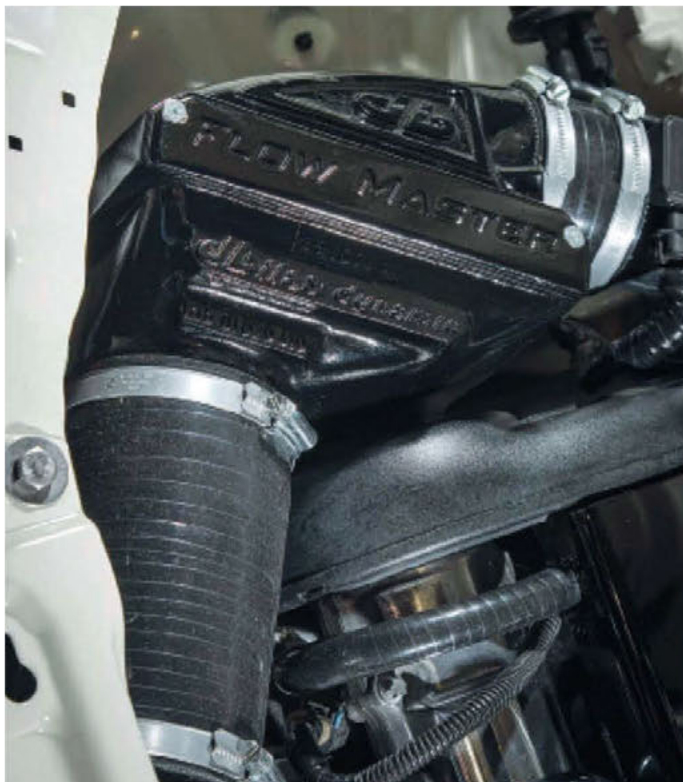
"In the end I'd narrowed it down to either cream or brown, but I spotted another Corsa C with chocolate brown paintwork around the same time, so that pretty much made my mind up for me," he chuckles.

The colour he eventually opted for is

called L87 Pearl White, a shade more commonly seen on classic VW Beetles. It certainly looks right at home on the equally curvy Corsa though, especially as Sean's twinned it with all manner of exterior changes. The Opel 'blitz' badges are present and correct, while the smoothed grille, bumpers and door handles help give the whole car a silky, smooth appearance.

FINE DETAILS

Custom details abound, with some of the more obscure tweaks being hard to spot unless you're a fully paid up Corsa C nerd. We're big fans of those one-off wing mirrors; Sean made them using the base from an AMG Mercedes and the mirror casings from a 6N Polo, and though the effect is certainly subtle there's no doubting that they look right at home on the little Vauxhall. There's more to be hunted out and spotted, like the Irmischer front splitter. Now there's nothing especially inventive about these (in fact they're something of a Corsa C staple), but Sean's car benefits from having the lower lip extended by 25mm, making it look lower and much more aggressive.



It's not often we 're-feature' a car that has changed so radically from its first feature



Those wheels are actually Rays Engineering Superfine mesh alloys, though you'd be forgiven for mistaking them for BBS 'cross spokes' that've become so popular over the last few years. Not only are they a good choice, they're also incredibly rare, so much so that when Sean found a set for sale in England, he hopped onto the boat from Northern Ireland and near enough ripped the seller's hand off!

TURNING JAPANESE

"They were a Japanese PCD to start with, 5x114 if I remember correctly. I had to have them re-drilled and had 5mm spacers and 10mm spacers made up for the front and rear."

The 16in Rays look right at home just about tucked under the arches, a drop in height achieved via a pair of universal air bags fitted to TA Technix coilovers at the front, plus a set of custom lowering springs at the rear.

"They're a good way to get an air suspension setup without having to pay crazy amounts," explains Sean. "The spring and helper from the coilover are replaced with the bags and a pair of retaining plates are bolted above and below to hold them in position, and that means the struts are fully adjustable."

Finally there's the interior, an element of the build that Sean agonised over in an effort to get just right. In its first feature the car boasted



Mirrors are a clever amalgam of Merc and VW



Give yourself ten car-geek points if you identified these as coming from a Fiat Barchetta

opulent white leather all over the place, and though it certainly looked very plush it probably wouldn't have worked especially well on the newly rebuilt car. Instead Sean has opted to temper the onslaught of white with some deeply cool tan leather Porsche 'tombstone' seats and similarly coloured mats, both of which stop the white dash, door cards and fixings and fittings from becoming overpowering. The changes continue to the rear and to the custom boot build, something that never fails to cause an expectant crowd to gather round thanks to the use of hardlines and plenty of re-purposed wood.

PERFECT PROJECT

Now of course this isn't the most powerful Corsa C to ever feature in the mag, but it is one of the best put together. Sean's planned approach and ability to blend elements from a variety of different car scenes has resulted in a stunningly well realised car that's packed full of fantastic changes that you really have to look hard to spot. It's also great to see an owner lavish so much love and attention on a Corsa, especially as that attention has been spread out over more than half a decade now and shows no sign of abating. Indeed Sean has all manner of plans for the car, with a swap to Z20LET possibly on the cards, plus some air suspension for the rear end and a new set of alloys. Watch this space, we think this Corsa has a long way to go yet. ○

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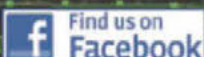
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■ ASK THE EXPERTS

VINYL WRAPS

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

We catch up with our inside man at 3M, Mr Kitch, to answer all your questions regarding vehicle wraps.

Wraps seem to have appeared out of nowhere – where did they begin?

The concept of vinyl wrapping may have only been on the modifying scene for a few years but it's been around a lot longer in the commercial market. Developing wraps for us came from a need in Germany where they wanted to ensure taxis were easily identifiable without having to specially paint every car. The majority of taxis over there are now wrapped



in 3M Gloss Ivory film. From there we discovered an appetite among vehicle owners for changing colours quickly without the hassle of getting a full-on paint job."

Is wrapping a pro job?

For a whole car it is recommended. We do make home wrapping kits that are perfect for roofs, bonnets and accent pieces but it takes a lot of skill and training to manipulate the film around the awkward shapes involved in wrapping a whole car. We'd always



recommend one of our pro Authorised Vehicle Wrappers found on our www.wrapyourcurves.co.uk website – we like to make sure that only the best of the best are there.

How do you get to be a pro wrapper?

In reality it takes a lot of hard work and practice. Here at 3M we have our own training program to get professionals to the 3M Autoapproved standard. We generally work with vehicle wrappers who have been in the trade for a couple of years. We assess their skills, premises and business to ensure the quality of their wraps meet our application requirements. From there they can train to become a 3M Authorised Vehicle Wrapper.

Is wrapping similar to window tinting?

In a way yes, it's an adhesive film and a heat gun. The skills involved do vary though because the application methods are different. Window tinting films generally go on wet glass and the moisture is squeezed out. A wrap goes on dry and is stretched around all the complex shapes on a vehicle. Whether one is harder than the other is something for debate – many tinters don't like wrapping and vice-versa.

Will technology ever make wrapping easier?

Most certainly, vinyl films have come a

long way over the past few years and that has already made wrapping easier and the quality of finish better. Here at 3M we're always looking to innovate and we've developed a number of unique technologies to assist application. Our 'Controltac' adhesive technology, for example, allows wrappers to float the film over the surface until they are happy with its placement. It's applying pressure that activates the adhesive and bonds the film to the car. We also have 'Comply' technology which are microscopic channels that eliminate air bubbles, you simply push them out.

It's always important to use the best film you can for any wrapping and, although we don't like to brag, we haven't found a better one yet.

Does a wrap damage your paint underneath?

It shouldn't, as long as you use the correct vinyl and not the extra-strong stuff used for signs. In fact, many people use vinyl purely for paint protection on bonnets and bumpers. That said it's important to assess the condition of a vehicle's paintwork before any wrap is applied. If there's been a questionable respray or accident damage where paint hasn't adhered to the vehicle properly it can come away when the film is removed. It's rare though, after all you wouldn't go wrapping a supercar if it was going to pull off the paint right? And we've all



As well as looking awesome, a good wrap also protects the paint underneath

seen plenty of those.

How long does a wrap last?

We always say up to 5-years. That doesn't mean they'll all fall off after that time but you may get a bit of fading on certain colours depending on the manufacturer of the film. We've seen some wraps last a lot longer than that though, the best thing is to maintain them like you would with a good paint job. Keep them clean and tidy.

How do I care for my wrap?

Shampoo and warm water – getting the bucket and wash-mitt out regularly. Personally I'd recommend Meguiar's, they have some great products for cleaning our wraps but then again they should do – they are part of 3M and we develop products alongside them.

Should I notify the DVLA about wrapping my car?

Up until recently no, because it isn't classed as a permanent colour change. Now we've been advised that, if you're wrapping the whole car a different colour, the DVLA has to be told and your V5 document amended. Apparently this is for identification for law enforcement, revenue collection and road safety. On the bright side, it's a good idea if your car is ever stolen and may get you out of a sticky situation with your insurance company in the event of a claim. Best to declare it with both parties, just to be safe.

Can I have a logo or sign on my car?

Yes, you can have anything you like, as long as it's legal and non-offensive of course. Many wrappers can apply the printable vinyl we offer which will



Vinyl wrapping opens up a world of possibilities

Nope, can't see anything here



Take any image logo or design you want.

Are all wraps road legal?

In the UK the majority of vinyl colours are perfectly legal. Chrome and other highly reflective films are something of a grey area though, that's why we don't currently offer those options.

Will wrapping affect the resale value of my car?

Possibly and most likely for the better. Protecting your car's paintwork can battle depreciation for a start. Many car dealers actually wrap cars in more popular colours to shift them too – you didn't think all those white Range Rovers were painted did you?

What happens if my wrap is damaged?

If it's a light scrape or a scuff

sometimes it can be patched so it won't be noticed but most of the time you can simply re-wrap the panel after repairing any damage underneath. That's the advantage of a wrap it's not only quick but there's no expensive colour-matching like with paint because the films are always the same. Gloss black is always gloss black and so on.

Can I wrap other stuff other than vehicles?

You can wrap anything you want within reason. We've seen everything from tool boxes and kitchen cabinets to front doors and office desks have our films applied.

If it's clean, dry and the film will stick to it – generally speaking it can be wrapped.

FOR MORE INFO GO TO:

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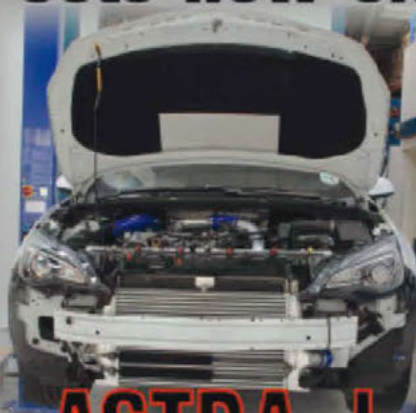
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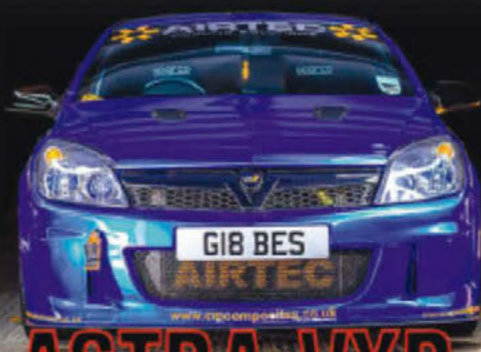
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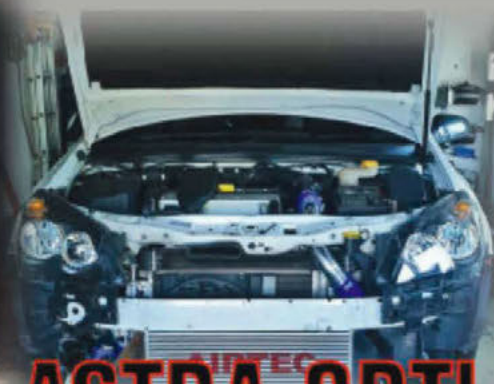
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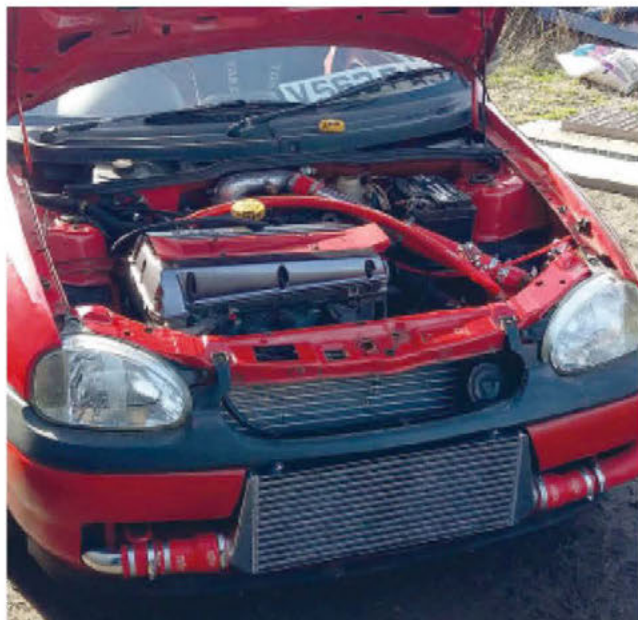


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HALL of FAME

Some top readers' cars to feast your eyes on!



SIMON CALVERT **CORSA B204**

Built in just 3 months this is Simon's rapid hatch. Originally a 1.0 12v, this Corsa has come a long way, as it's now fitted with a stonking great Saab B204! A TD04 turbo, VXR injectors and a CG Motorsports clutch ensure that the engine delivers its 320bhp efficiently and effectively. Inside you'll find Sparco seats with Takata harnesses, and an OMP wheel. A full respray, coilovers and a GSI kit are on the cards, and will really make this ballistic B stand out from the crowd.



ROBBIE JACOMB **ASTRA VXR**

Keen VXR owner Robbie was thrilled to have his car as the centrepiece of the Cobra Sports stand at the Performance Vauxhall Show this year. Other than the stainless tubular delight from the exhaust maestros at Cobra, Robbie's also gone to town on the rest of the car. RSS springs do the lowering, and a bunch of simple mods and a Rabbid/WGM remap sees the Arden Astra deliver a healthy 333bhp. We suspect there's plenty more to come from this tasty hot hatch.

Want to appear in the Hall Of Fame? We want to see your car. Just email us your name, phone number, no more than four photos, car spec and tell us a bit about yourself – where you're from, what your job is etc to: performancevauxhall@kelsey.co.uk



JAMIE MITCHELL
ASTRA GSi

After owning this tidy GSi for four years Jamie Mitchell has definitely made it his own. A VXR turbo now sits in the engine bay along with an EDS intercooler, Milltek decat and a whole load of hydrodipping. Coilovers provide a strong 80mm drop over grey Snowflakes, and an OPC grille, and Opel badging are subtle, yet effective tweaks, as are the Lexmaul rear lights. With an R&D Motorsport map this Stage 2 Arden beauty delivers around 260bhp. As a part time detailer you can be assured this GSi is as clean as they come.



MARK HANNABY
MK3 ASTRA

A humble delivery driver by day – but the pilot of this super-cool Astra Mk3 by night! Mark's Ecotec equipped GSi looks fantastic, and all it needed was a set of 60mm springs, Bilstein dampers, and those awesome (and not a little daring) BBS-style wheels. They're not going to please the purists out there, but they please us! Top work Mark.



ASHLEY RUSSELL
VECTRA SRI

Because of its 'sensible' nature, the Vectra is often overlooked when it comes to tuning, and while there is a bunch of loyal followers out there, we don't often get them sent in. One loyal owner is Ashley Russell, and this is his

2.0SEi 140. He's sensibly added a GSi rep front bumper, which is always a good idea, and he proudly claims to have carried out all the work himself. This extends to plenty of colour coding in a very 'in your face' shade of purple.





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This substantial prize allows you to choose from (where appropriate) Eibach's vast range of award winning products, be it Pro-kit springs, Sportline springs, coilovers, wheel spacers, or alignment products, enabling you to alter ride heights, improve image, increase tyre life, and above all seriously sort your chassis!

Continuing this fantastic prize, Eibach have teamed up with one of East Anglia's most reputable names for Vauxhall Performance Tuning, Courtenay Sport, to ensure your ride is set up to perfection. Correct fitting is imperative to achieve the maximum out of these quality products and the perfectionists from Courtenay Sport will ensure that. Priding themselves on their internationally renowned quality work, while still giving that personal touch, and with 30 years of experience on both road and race vehicles, you can be sure your Vauxhall will be in good hands! As their website says 'Whether you choose one of our turbo upgrades, ECU remaps, suspension or brake upgrades, engine transplants, engine reworking or a full engine rebuild we are confident that you will enjoy the journey home'.



Head over to the Eibach website www.eibach.co.uk to check out all the products available and tempt yourself further. A hint – it could be a good place to look for a certain answer!)

To win this remarkable prize all you need to do is answer the following question:

What material is used to create the award winning Eibach springs?

- A) Stainless steel**
- B) Hi – Ten steel**
- C) Mild Steel**

To enter, visit the Performance Vauxhall website www.totalvauxhall.co.uk and fill in the required fields in the dedicated entry page.

Good luck!



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

It is a condition of entry that the fitting must be carried out by mutual arrangement and agreement between the prize winner and the staff of and Kelsey Media, at the workshops of Courtenay Sport, North Walsham, Norfolk, where the fitting will be photographed for a full article, to appear in a later edition of the magazine. The vehicle should have no other mechanical issues needing attention and the winner must be prepared to travel there at their own expense and make sufficient time for the fitting and photography. The winner will be advised to ensure that their insurance will adequately cover the modification. Please indicate if you are not happy to receive further information from either Performance Vauxhall or Eibach UK. Entries close at midnight on 05/07/2015 and the winner/s will be drawn 06/07/2015. The winner/s will be notified within 28 days of the close of entries. The draw is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Entry is free. Open to residents of the UK aged over 18. Employees of Kelsey Media, Courtenay Sport or Eibach UK and their family members are not eligible to win. Only one entry permitted per person, no bulk entries will be accepted. The first correct entry drawn after the closing date will win. There is no cash alternative and the prize is not transferable. If any prize or product is lost or damaged during the course of delivery to the recipient, Kelsey Media will provide reasonable assistance in seeking to resolve the problem. However, it will not always be possible to obtain replacements for lost or damaged goods, and in that event, no financial compensation would be payable by Kelsey Media or their affiliates. We reserve the right to cancel the competition, if circumstances change that are beyond our control. By entering you agree to be bound by all the rules and agree that your surname and county may be released if you win. By providing personally identifiable information when entering this competition, you are agreeing that we may use it to provide you with on-going information about our products and services, although you can unsubscribe at any time, if you wish to do so. Performance Vauxhall Magazine is a Kelsey Media brand. Kelsey Media will only ever use your information in line with its Multi Layered Privacy Notice. For full details, visit kelsey.co.uk. If you have any questions please ask as submitting your data indicates your consent, until you choose otherwise, that we may contact you about products and services that we believe to be of relevance to you.

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LET NOVA

WORDS Jarkle PHOTOS Adam Walker

NOVA AND OUT

Paul Burney's sorted LET Nova reminds us why the Nova carved itself such an uncouth reputation 'back in the day,' but there's no doubting that this one has the bite to match its ferocious bark!

FAST FACTS

- ★ Rebuilt CzoLET with Coscast head and hybrid turbo
- ★ Seam welded and plated engine bay
- ★ Astra GSi brake setup
- ★ Speedline Alessio alloys
- ★ VW Dolphin Grey paintwork



LET NOVA



From all angles it's a timeless classic



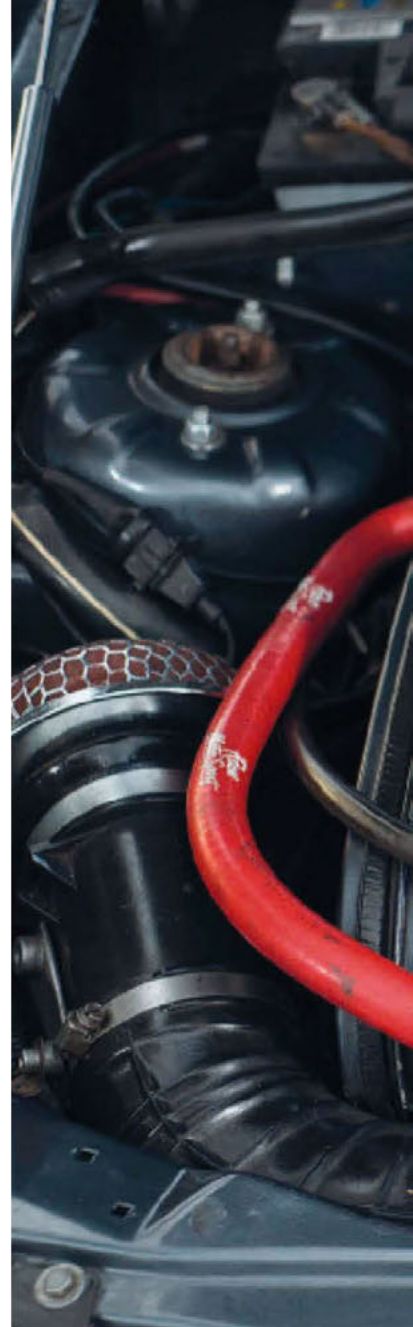
Not exactly the first Nova to wear these shoes, but it wears them well

I'm going to come clean right away and admit that I've begun a feature like this before, but read on and I hope you'll cut me some slack and perhaps give me the benefit of the doubt. The Vauxhall Nova really is the poster car for all of us in the world of modified Vauxhalls, and that's the case despite well over two decades having rolled by since the last one puffed off the line down in Spain. As far as the general, non-

Griffin obsessed public is concerned, tuned Vauxhalls start and end with the Nova. To those who don't know better (or refuse to adjust their preconceptions), the Nova is still the weapon of choice for the automotive hoodlum; it's the car that can be spotted with plastic McDonald's trays wedged under its rear wheels at 11.30pm on a Friday night, the car that bellows down the local high street in the early hours of the morning, and the wheels of choice for anyone

planning on attending an illegal rave in a seedy part of town. Of course we all know that this is in the past and that the Nova is now both rare and sought after, but it's also important to remember that all of this is still part of the car's appeal – that slightly rowdy element is hardwired into the Nova's DNA, and, as far as we're concerned, that's a no bad thing at all.

None of this is in any way supposed to imply that Paul Burney, the owner of this immaculate example, is a hooligan,



OWNER PAUL BURNEY

AGE 25
OCCUPATION Telephone engineer
FIRST VAUXHALL This one – it's my first car and I still own it
TOUGHEST PART OF THE BUILD Getting the engine set-up correctly and running smoothly
BEST PART OF THE BUILD Driving it, it gets so many positive comments it's unreal



Clean, simple and subtle – we love it!



but the image the car carved out for itself in the early part of the last decade certainly played a part in his desire to own a Nova.

"I'm 25 so I remember Novas being everywhere and them being the cars to have. I wanted one from the first

moment I got into modified Vauxhalls and planned to have one for my first car from the very start."

Paul was as good as his word, and as soon as he passed his test he set out to hunt down a suitable example to make his own, eventually coming up

trumps with an ultra clean 1.2SX – it was, in Paul's own words, the perfect first car. We're big fans of the old school Vauxhall 8v and are the first to sing its praises, but it's also fair to say that, in small block guise at least, they aren't exactly the most powerful of engines.

Paul agreed and he was soon casting around for a suitable upgrade, eventually plumping for the 1.3 setup from a Nova Sport.

"It was the real deal, complete with the correct manifold, twin 40 carbs and Irmischer airbox," Paul explains with a grin. "I had that fitted within months and yeah, it was certainly a big improvement on the 1.2, but still not exactly quick enough for my tastes."

The Sport motor was swiftly relieved of duty and put up for

"I WANTED ONE FROM THE FIRST MOMENT I GOT INTO MODIFIED VAUXHALLS!"

LET NOVA

sale, eventually selling for a considerable sum and allowing Paul to go engine shopping, his sights now firmly set on a C20LET with all the trimmings. It's a sign of the times and an indicator of just how rare good LETs are becoming that Paul ended up buying and breaking a Corsa B turbo for the engine in question – there aren't many rough Cavalier or Calibra Turbos left, so now the engine transplant recipients are themselves becoming potential donor cars!

"The conversion itself went to plan, it was just a case of checking the

engine itself was in good order and then bolting it into place," explains Paul. "I did prepare the bay by stitch welding it and fitting a plate kit, but other than that it was all pretty smooth sailing really."

B-ROAD BLASTER

Now the LET in question wasn't especially highly spec'd, but it wasn't long before Paul treated it to some of the all important building blocks for more power further down the line, hence the Coscast head, XE inlet cam, ARP rods and head bolts, and a hybrid

KKK turbo. Old school mods maybe, but proven and certainly very effective. Throw in the EVO 5 chip (courtesy of long time PV hero and twin-engined Corsa builder Adam Beard) and you've got a setup that's good for 272bhp, more than enough in a Nova that spends the vast majority of its time on B-roads.

"It's making that figure at 1BAR of boost and seems pretty unstressed, so Adam reckons we should be able to get through the 300bhp barrier by upping the boost to 1.2BAR in the future."

Now the keen Nova fans among you

will no doubt be expecting to see an F28 nestled up against the right hand side of that LET, but instead you'll find a five speed F20 – perhaps not the best 'box for this kind of application, but cheap to acquire and easy to find.

Let's not beat about the bush, a Nova Turbo is a bit of a torque-steery monster without a sophisticated limited slip diff, but then it's also fair to say that that's part of the appeal for most. These aren't subtle cars and the raw, challenging way they deliver their power is what makes them so popular to this day. Certainly



Cheeky black plates may not be legal, but they look the part against the grey bodywork



TECH SPEC

ENGINE

1998cc C20LET DOHC16v, ARP bottom end bolts, Coscast head, C20XE inlet cam, VXR blue injectors, FSE FPR, Collins actuator, KKK26 hybrid turbo from KRS Turbos, 2.5in Powerflow stainless steel exhaust, FMIC, Spal 12in fan, Nova GSi radiator, oil cooler, silicone boost pipes, FMIC, seam welded and strengthened engine bay, Evo 5 chip set

POWER

272bhp (Claimed)

TRANSMISSION

F20 five-speed with AP Racing clutch, equal length driveshafts

SUSPENSION

Gaz coilovers and polybushes, GSi ARB (front), Spax coilovers and polybushes (rear)

BRAKES

Astra GSi discs and calipers with aftermarket pads (front), rebuilt drums (rear)

WHEELS AND TYRES

6x16in Speedline Alessio alloys with 195/40x16 Toyo Proxes

INTERIOR

Nova GSi seats and dash, OE carpets, Astra GTE 'digi-dash,' boost and intake temperature gauges

EXTERIOR

Nova SX two-door in VW Dolphin Grey, Nova GSi bumpers and side skirts in gloss black, Nova GSi spoiler in Dolphin Grey

THANKS

Scott Archibald, Nick Ellyard, Ryan Barber and Adam Beard. I'd also like to mention my mum who passed away just before this feature, the car is something of a tribute to her and she was a big influence in the build

"WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET THROUGH THE 300BHP BARRIER BY UPPING THE BOOST TO 1.2BAR"



LET NOVA



We guarantee there's a lot of fun to be had behind the wheel of this little monster

Paul hasn't bothered fitting an LSD, though the car does benefit from some equal length driveshafts and an AP Racing paddle clutch.

Now it's probably fair to say that we're at the stage where there's a 'set menu' for the exterior of your Nova, and in some respects Paul's car follows it to the letter; Speedline alloys, GSi bumpers, skirts and spoiler are all present and correct and look spot on.

There are several deviations from the Nova norm though, with that shade of grey being perhaps the most prominent.

"It's actually a Volkswagen colour, Dolphin Grey," Paul explains. "Me and my friend Scott prepared and sprayed it all ourselves, and he actually pitched in and helped me out throughout the build – so I must say a massive thanks to him."

DIGITAL AGE

Inside and it's business as usual, so you'll find the time old Nova upgrades like a GSi dash, GSi seats, an Astra GTE 'digi dash' and various boost and temperature gauges dotted about. Again, not groundbreaking stuff, but a proven route to make a Nova look good interior-wise and a fitting way to round off a really nice build.

Again, we're not for a minute

suggesting that Paul is an automotive hooligan (on the public roads at least), but it's good to recall that brief period in time when the humble Nova was inexorably linked to the car culture that, let's face it, was on the ragged edge of legality. Those days might now be long gone and the Nova now a rare car, but that slight edginess is woven into its very essence and it's something that just makes us love it even more! ○



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KADETT PICKUP



PICK ME UP



FAST FACTS

- ★ C20NE, with uprated cam and Mattig manifold
- ★ Spax dampers and Koni springs
- ★ Pick-up conversion from a 2-door estate
- ★ Kadett E dashboard
- ★ 16in WRD Mesh alloys

Growing tired of the usual modified motors? Looking for something a little different? Well how about this quirky Kadett pick up all the way from Denmark!

KADETT PICKUP

The fox tail is lucky apparently.
Not for the fox though



We have to begin this story with a confession – neither us, nor the car's present owner, Michael Blattmann, know a great deal about the origins of this interesting conversion. What we do know is that during the 80s there was a growing trend for tuners, and coachbuilders to offer model designations not actually available from the manufacturers. There were a huge number of conversions based on popular models – the Michalak cabrio Corsa A, Artz Corsa A Caravan (an estate based on a four door saloon Nova shell), and Baur Kadett C Aero to name just three. It was big business over in Germany, and along with the cabrio and estate conversions some were being a little more crazy and producing pick-up variants

CONVERT-ABLE

One car ripe for a pick up conversion is the Kadett D estate. Unusually for an estate it came in a two door variant, meaning that the conversion is a lot more straightforward, and doesn't require awkward or clumsy modifications to the B-pillars and doors. From the little Michael knows about this example he's been able to piece together that it was created in the early 90s in Germany by a bloke called Jürgen Otte. Apparently Jürgen got hold of several scrap Kadett Ds, and created a pair of identical pick-ups. Where the 'twin' is we've no idea, but we do know that up until a couple of

years ago this D was still in use in Germany, and was painted a rather 'interesting' shade of violet.

And this is where Michael, a trucker by trade, stumbled upon the car and decided to bring it back home to Denmark. Buying the car was the easy part, but trying to get Danish TUV to approve it was a mighty task. Due to

the significant structural changes the authorities simply weren't interested in granting the car legal status. Even armed with all the German papers the Danish version of VOSA refused to budge. All that was left to do, other than ship the car back to Germany, was to put the car through an extensive, and costly type-approval process.

Michael had his heart set on keeping the Opel, so he began the tedious process, but in the meantime he set about overhauling the neglected bodywork. The actual conversion was carried out very well, but it had been quite a few years since it was completed, so there was plenty to do. The chequer-plate load area was



Old school engine with old school modifications



Kadett E dashboard, and LOTS of yellow

“JÜRGEN CREATED A PAIR OF IDENTICAL PICK-UPS FROM SCRAP KADETT DS”

redone, as was the large rollbar complete with de rigueur spotlights. The front end saw the fitment of an aftermarket grille – which gives the Kadett an oddly ‘Nova-like’ appearance. To add to the retro feel an alloy fuel filler cap and triangular bonnet vents scream ‘90s!

Also achingly 90s is the very yellow interior! The most obvious change (other than the huge bulkhead separating the passengers from the load area – is the dashboard. Any good Vauxhall fan will instantly recognise is as a Mk2 Astra Dash (or Kadett E to be more precise). It fits in very snugly, as does all the stereo equipment, which

has been crammed in pretty much every available orifice.

Considering its retro appeal, you wouldn’t expect a state of the art engine to live in the bay – and sure enough a trusty C20XE delivers 115 old school bhp thanks to a Mattig manifold, Jetex exhaust, and custom cam. The modest power is delivered through a Kadett D GSi gearbox and the last piece of the Vauxhall/Opel jigsaw is a mix of Kadett GSi and Vectra brakes.

Other notable mods include the WRD Mesh wheels. They’re in 7.5x16in flavour at the front, and a beefy 9.5 wide at the rear. To complement the ‘wedge’ shape of the pickup Koni



springs were chosen to drop the front end by 40mm and actually raise the rear by 20mm.

One thing’s for sure, in a car scene where there are many cars following the same formula, Michael’s certain not to bump into another car like his. Well, not unless the mystery second pick-up ever surfaces that is! 🕵️

TECH SPEC

ENGINE

C20NE, sports camshaft, 115bhp, Mattig manifold, Jetex sport exhaust, various polished parts

POWER

115bhp

TRANSMISSION

F16 gearbox, Sachs clutch,

SUSPENSION

Spax dampers, Koni springs: front -40mm, rear + 20mm, Mattig-strut brace, Kadett E GSi power steering

BRAKES

Front: Kadett E GSi discs and calipers, rear: Vectra A 2.0 discs and calipers

WHEELS AND TYRES

WRD Mesh alloys, front 7.5x16in with 195/40x16 Uniroyal tyres. Rear 9.5x16in with 225/40x16s, 30mm rear wheel spacers

INTERIOR

Kadett E dashboard, Opel Motorsport wheel from Calibra, GTE seats, Schroth harnesses, digital dashboard from Kadett GSi, Kenwood headunit, Hifonics amp, 2x Blaupunkt amps, JBL speakers, 2x Emphaser subs

EXTERIOR

1982 Kadett D Caravan (estate) bodyshell, converted to pick-up, widened wheel arches, rollbar with auxiliary spotlights, bonnet with air intakes, tinted taillights, aluminum filler cap,

THANKS

Jürgen Otte



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the blues

A coat of limited edition Subaru Impreza paint helps this van stand out from the crowd, but it's what's under the bonnet that really makes it a particularly fine Mk4. **WORDS** Jarkle **PHOTOS** Rob Fisher

FAST FACTS

- * Fully forged Z20LEH with 86.5mm Wossner pistons
- * GT2871R turbo
- * Quaife LSD
- * Rotiform VCE alloys
- * Subaru paint

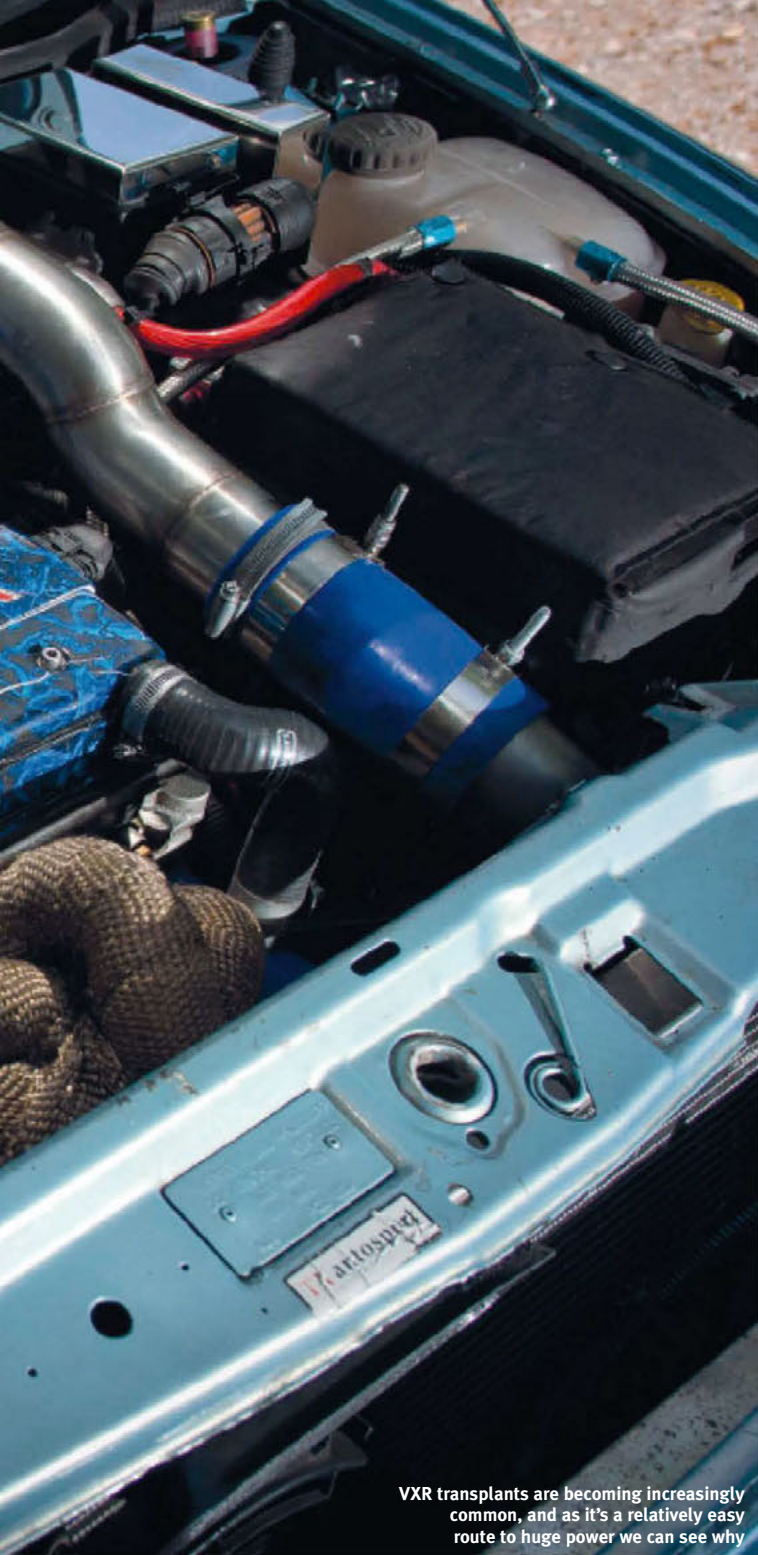




Sometimes, just once in a while, you run into a Vauxhall that's just 'right.' Now we're not going to pretend that the van in front of you is especially unique; it won't re-write the rules of the scene and it won't smash out 9 seconds quarters before mincing Gallardos on the way home, but it is a very unique looking vehicle. Some of you will no doubt be ready to dispute that, but hold fire for a moment and take the time to remember that at the end of the day this is a van, a car based Astra van, yes, but still something that was designed to haul bricks and tools for living. The very fact that the Astravan forms such a key part of the tuned Vauxhall world should be something to celebrate,

"I'M PLANNING ON STEPPING UP TO A GTX30 TURBO IN THE NEAR FUTURE!"





VXR transplants are becoming increasingly common, and as it's a relatively easy route to huge power we can see why

particularly as the Mk4 variant has never been more popular – we've lost track of the number that've had Z20LETs and Saab engines fitted!

HEART TRANSPLANT

This van doesn't feature either of those two engines (though it did once have the former), and a peek under the bonnet will now reveal the Z20LEH from a VXR. Now these engines are steadily becoming a more common transplant candidate (thanks in part to the number of VXRs that've met their maker in Britain's unforgiving hedgerows and lamp posts) but seeing one in an Astravan is still something of a rarity. It has been built by Ricky Neal, a man with a penchant for BMWs and someone who makes no bones about how the project began back in 2011;

"I bought the van with a Z20LET in,

though the engine really had been thrown into the bay and properly bodged," he recalls. "The previous owner had chopped the top hat in situ and bits of swarf and leftover metal had found their way into the engine itself... it was a bit of a mess."

A few weeks of fettling and damage limitation saw the van back up and running again, but Ricky soon tired of the 200 or so bhp it was making and began plotting for something a bit more powerful to take its place. This train of thought eventually led him to Courtenay Sport and a Z20LEH that had just been freed from a decidedly sorry looking Astra VXR. The chaps at Courtenay were left to get on with what they do best (building rock-solid, big BHP Vauxhall engines) while Ricky set to work sorting the van's shell. There were a few minor scabs of rust that

TECH SPEC

ENGINE

1998cc Z20LEH DOHC 16v with 86.5mm Wossner pistons, I-beam con rods, lightweight flywheel, Cometic 1.6mm MLS head gasket, Stage 3 ported and polished head, Piper fast road cams, GT2871R turbo, Forge dump valve, Skyline FMIC with 3in end tanks, 2.5in intercooler pipework, braced TX Autosport tubular manifold, 2.75in non-resonated turbo back exhaust system, Siemens 630cc injectors, EDS inlet manifold, Pipercross induction kit, custom angled 80mm intake, VXR 80mm AFM, RnD Motorsport top hat and MAP sensor connecting pipe, Roose and MTC silicone hoses, RnD Motorsport air con delete, professionally sprayed rocker cover.

POWER

(Owner's estimate) 380-400bhp

TRANSMISSION

M32 six-speed gearbox with Courtenay Sport Helix clutch, Quaife LSD, uprated driveshafts

SUSPENSION

Front: Koni FZ coilovers, NOS Vauxhall lower arms and ARB links, rear: Koni FZ coilovers, polybushes all round

BRAKES

Front: Astra VXR discs and calipers, rear: Astra Mk4 GSi discs and calipers, aftermarket pads and braided lines all round

WHEELS AND TYRES

8x18in Rotiform VCE monoblock rims with 215/35x18 Nankang NS2 tyres

INTERIOR

Custom flocked black dash and door pillars, custom black leather and blue Alcantara door cards with one 8in SPL dynamic mid bass speaker, two 6.5in Ground Zero mid bass speakers, one Ground Zero 3in tweeter in each door card, custom B pillars with Ground Zero bullet tweets, custom diamond stitched mats, professionally sprayed centre console (matching rocker cover), OMP steering wheel, OPC Recaro seats, digital volt meter built into rear view mirror, satellite and DVD flip out head unit, custom subwoofer enclosures with two 15in Ground Zero subs, custom Plexiglass amplifier and battery surrounds with two Shock Industry amps, carpeted rear enclosure, custom built subwoofer enclosure in spare wheel well.

EXTERIOR

Mk4 Astravan with custom stage three paint job in Subaru WR1 blue, GSi bodykit, Irmischer front grille, body coloured trims

THANKS

Courtenay Sport for custom fully forged engine build, SM Tuning for bespoke software, Ad Edwards from torque Motors, Z20let lovers members for the help and advice with the build of the van, Leon from LB Customz, Sunil Raj Phull and Billy Vilkho for all their help

Rotiforms look the business



needed seeing to and a number of blemishes that hinted at its previous life as a commercial vehicle, but the majority of his time was spent prepping the shell for paint – something that's now definitely one of the van's distinguishing features.

"The paint was actually one of the first things I decided on, though narrowing it down and making a decision took a little longer. In the end I went for Subaru WR1 Blue, the colour on limited edition Peter Solberg cars."

CROSS THE STREAMS

This is another of those colours that probably shouldn't work on the Mk4 Astravan and yet, somehow, it really does. It's a shade that makes the van proudly stand out when parked amongst the masses of white, grey and (when at PVS) Arden Blue, and a fantastic advert for trying something a little different when it comes to picking your paint. That said, the van was far from perfect when Ricky got it back together and lowered it down onto the 'snowflake' alloys he was running at the time.

"I was really happy with the paintwork and how the body looked, but the Vauxhall wheels just looked far too ordinary when paired with the Subaru colour, so that's when I knew I needed something a bit more special."

The aftermarket wheel world is more expansive than ever nowadays and you really can choose from a dizzying array of alloys in a staggering number of styles, but Ricky decided he didn't want to take the easy route and pick something that would bolt up to the van's hubs right out of the box. He ended up selecting a set of Rotiform VCE monoblock rims, wheels that look stunning yet came in decidedly non-Vauxhall friendly 5x112 PCD and a centrebore of 57.1.

"I was determined to make them work, and though the easiest method would've been to fit some 'wobble bolts' to make them into a 5x110 fitment, I wasn't keen, not with a plan for nearly 400bhp being sent through the front end!"

In the end Ricky opted to take the wheels to a specialist machine shop and have them heavily modified so they'd fit correctly, a process that eventually saw the centrebore

widened to 65.1mm and the stud holes re-drilled, finally allowing him to bolt the Rotiforms into place. Of course wheel choice is a decidedly personal thing and there will no doubt be those among you who dislike these Rotiforms as much as we love them, but they certainly fill the arches nicely and suit that pale blue Subaru hue.

By this point the guys over at Courtenay had just about finished building Ricky's Z20LEH, though the engine that was delivered to him was a long way from being ready to fire up under its own steam. Ricky made the decision early on that he wanted to

handle the fitting and final building of the engine, hence why he'd been amassing an impressive collection of high-end ancillaries for months beforehand! The manifolds, fueling and cooling systems, turbo and pipework were all tackled by Ricky and his close friends as soon as the freshly rebuilt engine arrived back at his workshop. Even the briefest of glances at the spec of that Z20LEH should be enough to tell you all you need to know about Ricky's desire for raw power, and it's clear that the current power figure of 380bhp is only the beginning. All the building blocks for further bhp hikes are already

in place, hence the 86.5mm Wossner pistons, I-beam rods, 630cc injectors and beefy fuel pump, ported and polished head with Piper fast road cams, and, of course, that hefty GT2871R turbo. Throw in the SM Tuning map and it isn't all that surprising that this van can make such high bhp figures, though Ricky readily admits that he's already craving more.

POWER GAMES

"It's running 30psi now and probably making just over the 400bhp mark, so that's pretty good for now – I'm certainly glad I fitted the Quaife LSD

and uprated driveshafts," he laughs. "I'm planning on stepping up to a GTX30 turbo in the near future though and that will allow me to make much more, and that's why I spent so long making sure the internals were up to the task."

Transmission gremlins were something that plagued the van up until relatively recently, with Ricky going through a number of M32 gearboxes before working out that part of the problem was the sheer amount of weight in the back of the van.

"When I first built it it had a huge amount of ICE hardware in

Subaru paint works brilliantly on the Astravan's flanks

“IT’S RUNNING 30PSI NOW AND
PROBABLY MAKING JUST OVER
THE 400BHP MARK”



OWNER
RICKY NEAL

AGE 29

OCCUPATION Contract Manager

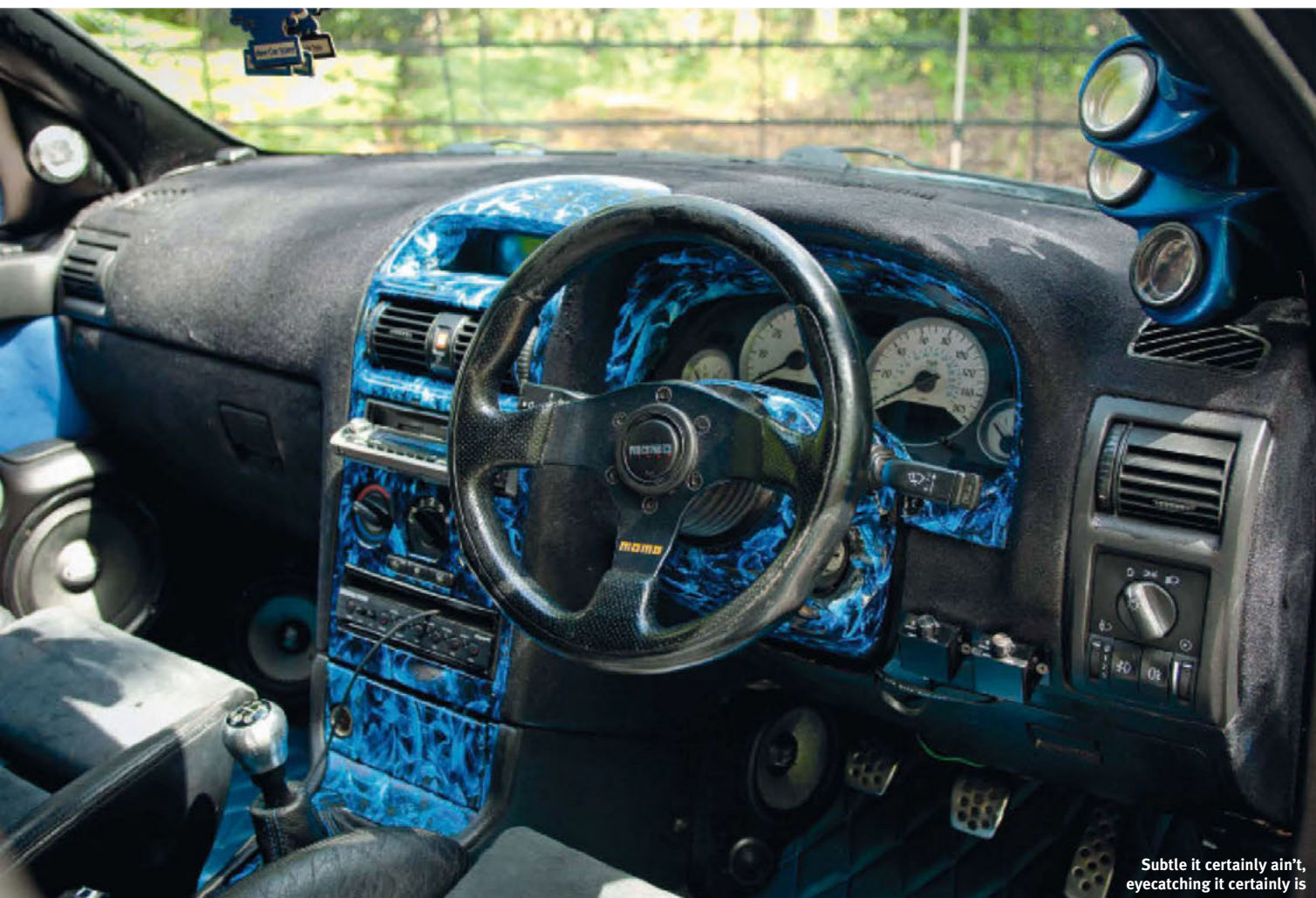
FIRST VAUXHALL This one!

TOUGHEST PART OF THE BUILD

Going through so many M32 gearboxes!

BEST PART OF THE BUILD The attention and positive comments it gets now it's finished

ASTRAVAN



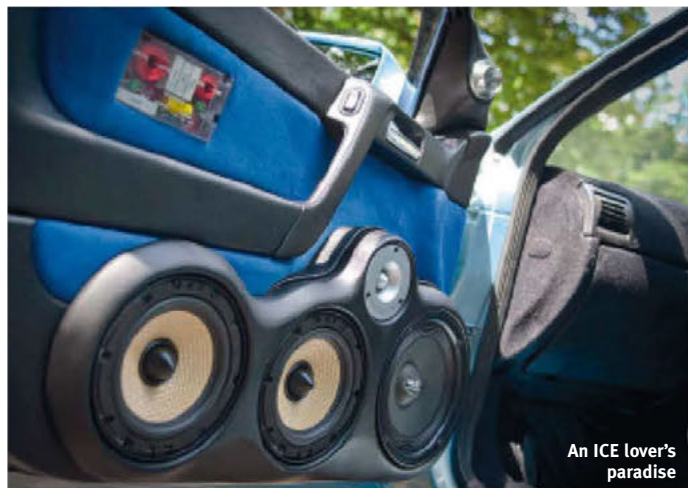
Subtle it certainly ain't, eyecatching it certainly is

the back, well over a ton of the stuff if I remember correctly. I'm pretty sure the weight, and the hard launches of course, were contributing to the gearboxes going pop!"

Not that the loading bay of the van is now free of speakers, amps and subs – open the doors and you'll still be greeted by some seriously high end noise making equipment, but it's certainly a lot more restrained than it once was. What you will find is acres of custom leather and Alcantara trim, diamond stitched floor mats (to match the Corsa VXR 'clamshell' seats that Ricky plans to fit soon), OPC Recaro seats, a flocked dash, a smattering of

amps (of course), and a flocked dash, all of which help make this former workhorse a genuinely plush, comfortable place to sit.

So, what's next? Ricky's already made clear that he's nowhere near finished with this van and that he's pushing ahead with a number of big modifications that will see it make even more power. A bigger Garret turbo is already winging its way to his address and should have been fitted (and the van remapped accordingly) by the end of the summer, while those ever-popular Corsa VXR chairs will have been bolted into place by the time you read this. ○



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PERFORMANCE ACTION DAY

Lots of show combined with plenty of go at Castle Combe's first Action Day of 2015

WORDS & PHOTOS Simon Cooke

Castle Combe is a great place for a laid back, yet action packed track day, and the Spring Performance Car Action Day was just such an event – it does exactly what it says on the tin... and then a bit more. The 2015 show was supported by MCR Specialist Cars and Infinity Exhausts and the Wiltshire circuit played host to just about every car you could imagine, from Bentleys, Lamborghinis, race cars – and, of

course, a handful of tasty Vauxhalls in among the hundreds of display cars from over 113 club stands. The threatened rain never happened, which meant that there was plenty to see and do. Wherever you looked around the circuit parked up on club stands was a surprising range of modified Vauxhalls – There was certainly something for everyone whether you like yours old school or bang up to date, with dipped engine bays, chromed components, stripped

out and caged interiors, and slammed to the ground examples.

If sitting parked up in the sunshine was a bit tame for you, then you could always slap on a helmet and take your car out on the track and show that you had what it takes. Or you could just sit back and admire the drifting displays.

There are more action days at Combe this year, and they're well worth checking out. For full details go to www.facebook.com/castlecombeperformancecaractiondays.





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ACTION DAY



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			£50.31	£346.00



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WHEELARCH REPAIRS

Have you got crusty arches? Vauxhall guru Specky shows how to fix them with new steel. **WORDS AND PHOTOS:** Rob Hawkins

Rotten arches have been the Achilles heel of many a Vauxhall. Fortunately, repair panels are available for most models, but there's an art to fitting them properly and making sure that the finished results look as good as new. We ran

this feature a few years back, but feel it worthwhile repeating it – as it's an issue that's certainly not going to get any better!

The correct approach to repairing a rotten arch is to cut away all the old rotten metal and only weld to rust-free steel. Most arches are constructed with an inner and outer panel, which

are welded together along the lower arch seam or lip. Consequently, an inner arch can be repaired by overlapping a panel, whereas an outer arch should have a new panel butt welded to the original bodywork for a flush finish.

In the real world, not everyone sticks to recommendations. Dougie's

Cav GSi, shown in our photos, had an outer arch repair panel welded on top of the original bodywork with the edges smoothed over using filler!

We had to cut away the old repair panel and sand off half a tub of filler before we could get our hands on the original metalwork.

When fitting new panels it is

USEFUL INFO

ESSENTIAL TOOLS

Air compressor, air saw

Angle grinder with cutting and grinding discs, goggles and gloves

Marker pen

MIG welder, mask and gloves

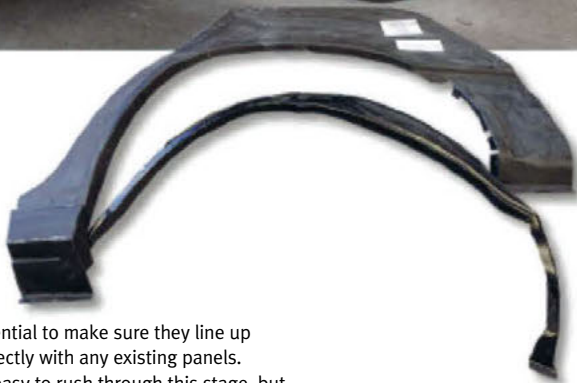
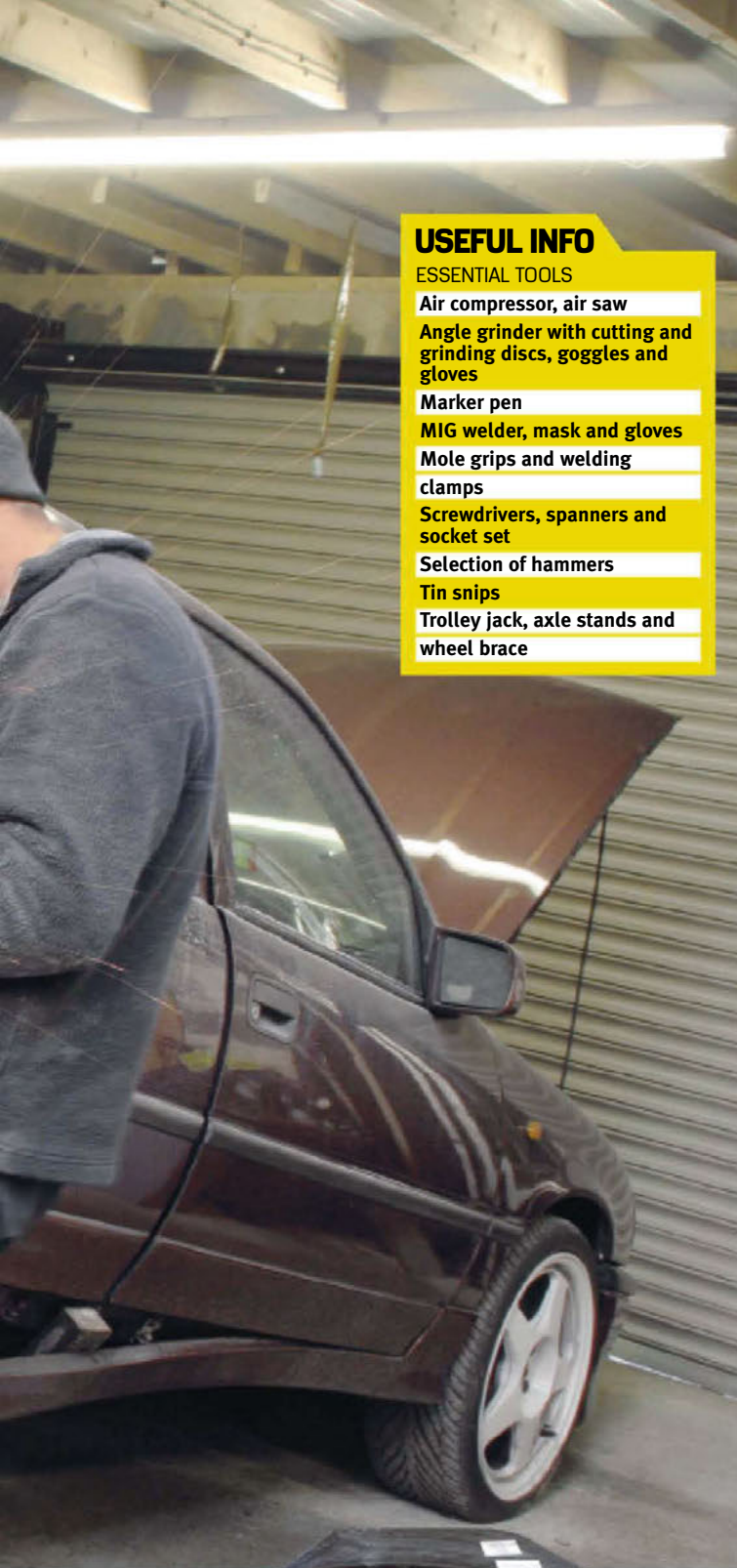
Mole grips and welding clamps

Screwdrivers, spanners and socket set

Selection of hammers

Tin snips

Trolley jack, axle stands and wheel brace



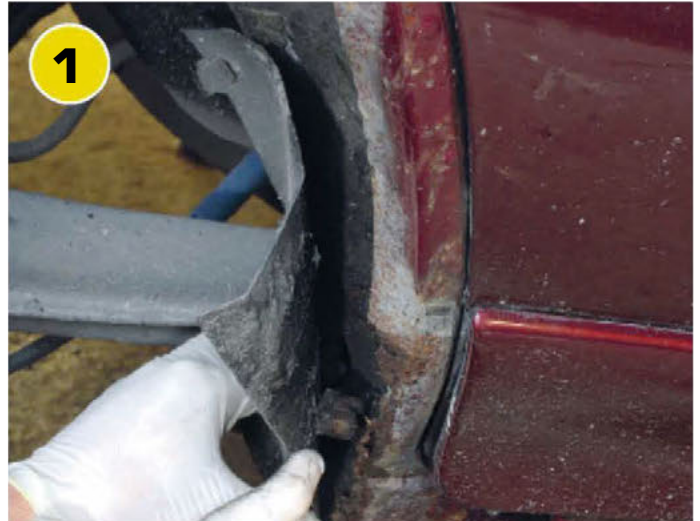
essential to make sure they line up correctly with any existing panels. It's easy to rush through this stage, but the results can be disastrous if the rear doors won't open.

Depending on the condition of your arches and the extent of any previous botched repairs, set aside at least one full day to repair one arch.

That may sound like a lot of time, but it's surprising what you can find when you start to dig away at rusty metal.

The following 24 steps follow Vauxhall surgeon Specky, as he repairs the offside rear arch on a Cavalier.

1



Slacken the rear wheel nuts, raise and secure the rear of the car on axle stands, then remove the rear wheels. Remove any inner trim panels, as well as sill covers and trim that will get in the way.

2



If the rear bumper covers part of the arch, remove it, then start to inspect the extent of the rust around the inner and outer arches. Use a screwdriver and steel wire brush to locate any unwanted holes.

3



Using an angle grinder with a 1.5 mm cutting disc, cut away the outer arch where it's rotten. This will help you see if the inner arch behind it is solid metal. In our case, the Cavalier's outer arches have been repaired before.



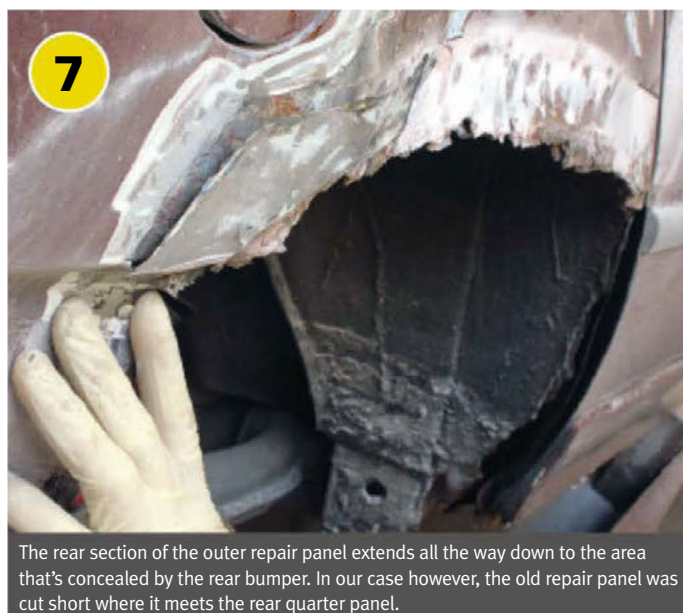
We've found an old repair panel welded onto the original arch. We need to remove the outer paintwork and filler to locate the spot welds for the outer repair panel. The spot welds are high up and covered over with filler.



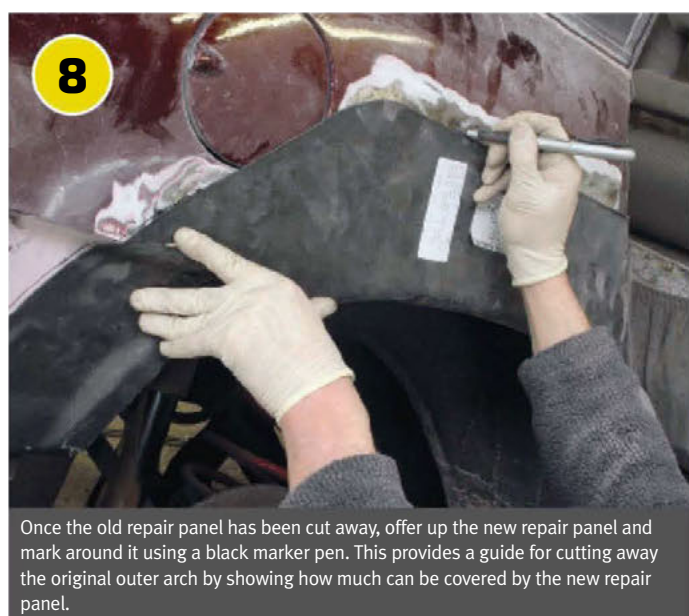
Armed with an angle grinder and cutting disc, the spot welds are cut and the outer repair panel peeled away. This repair panel has been welded over the original outer arch then filled! The original outer arch should have been cut away first.



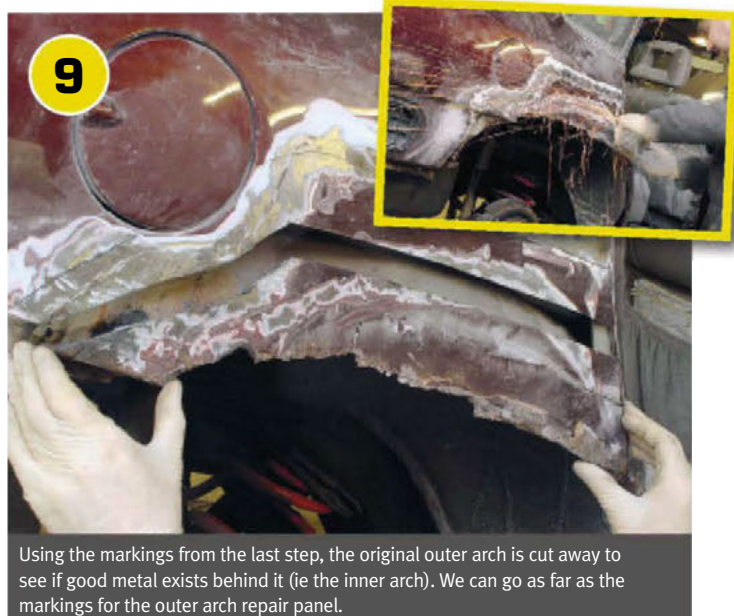
The old outer repair panel extends down the front of the rear arch, so the rear door needs to be opened to cut it away. If you use an angle grinder to do this, protect the upholstery with old blankets or curtains.



The rear section of the outer repair panel extends all the way down to the area that's concealed by the rear bumper. In our case however, the old repair panel was cut short where it meets the rear quarter panel.



Once the old repair panel has been cut away, offer up the new repair panel and mark around it using a black marker pen. This provides a guide for cutting away the original outer arch by showing how much can be covered by the new repair panel.



Using the markings from the last step, the original outer arch is cut away to see if good metal exists behind it (ie the inner arch). We can go as far as the markings for the outer arch repair panel.



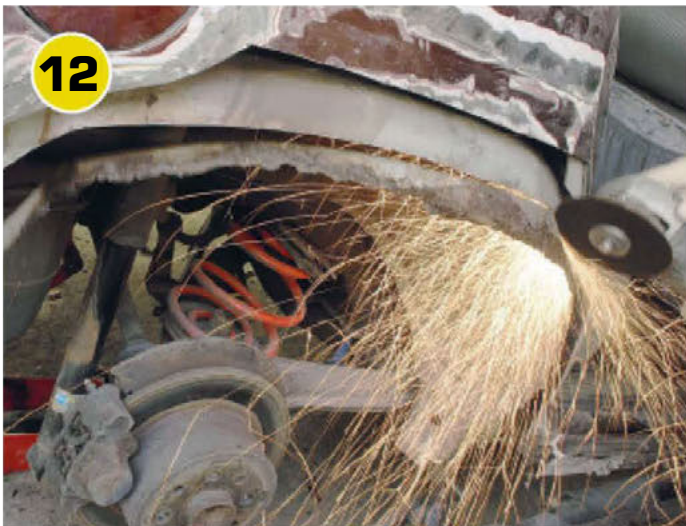
10

Here's the main cause of the rot: a foam cover for the rear inertia-reel seatbelt, which unfortunately helps to soak up any water that drains through. By carefully sliding your fingers between the inner and outer arch panel, you can extract the foam.



11

With the original outer arch cut away, the extent of the rust around the inner arch can be inspected. Offer up the inner arch repair panel to see how much metal can be cut away before starting up the angle grinder.



12

Trim off the rotten edges of the original inner arch using an angle grinder and cutting disc. The replacement inner arch panel will overlap the original, so try to leave a sufficient amount of old metal.



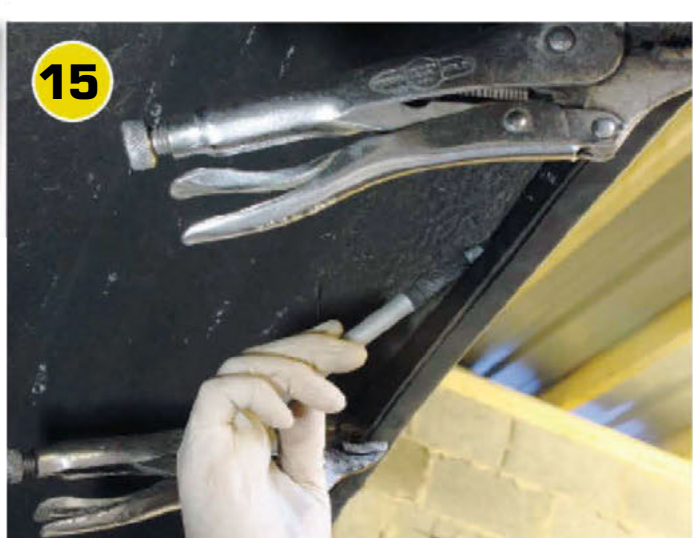
13

Fit the outer arch repair panel onto the car, making sure it lines up correctly. Use a hammer to bend the repair panel to the correct shape. Clamp with mole grips, then drill a couple of 4mm holes and secure with self-tapping screws.



14

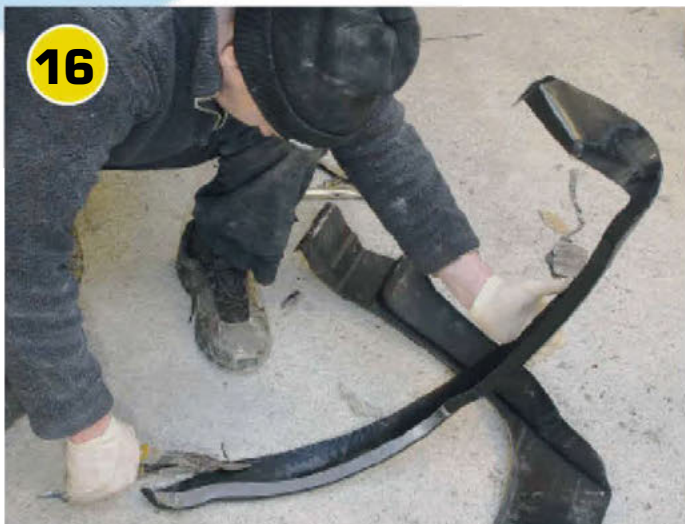
Remove the outer arch repair panel. Position the inner arch repair panel in place, then refit the outer panel and its two screws. Finally, use mole grips to clamp the inner and outer repair panels together along the lower arch seam where they join.



15

Use a marker pen to mark along the inside of the inner arch repair panel, where it overlaps with the original inner arch panel. This will help to determine how much of the inner arch repair panel needs to be cut away.

16



Remove both the inner and outer arch repair panels. Find the marks on the inner arch repair panel made in the last step. Don't cut along these lines, but allow roughly half an inch additional metal to overlap onto the original inner arch panel.

17



Clean up the inside of the inner arch along the edge where it sits next to the new inner arch repair panel. Clamp the inner and outer arch repair panels together with mole grips, then refit both and secure with screws and mole grips.

18



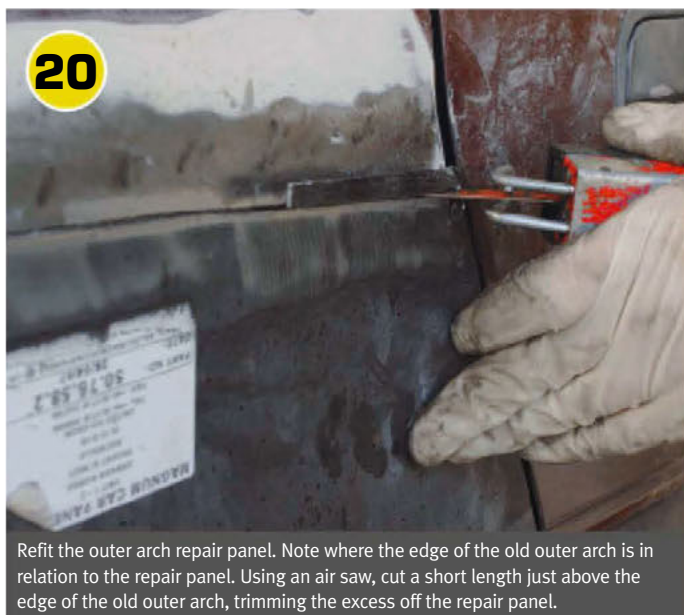
From within the wheelarch area, tack weld the inner arch repair panel to the original inner arch. This is awkward to do, so take your time. Run a series of tack welds to ensure the inner arch repair panel is secure.

19



With the inside of the inner arch repair panel tack welded in position, remove the outer arch repair panel. Tack weld the outside of the inner arch repair panel. Use welding clamps to push the new repair panel onto the old inner arch.

20



Refit the outer arch repair panel. Note where the edge of the old outer arch is in relation to the repair panel. Using an air saw, cut a short length just above the edge of the old outer arch, trimming the excess off the repair panel.

WHEELARCH REPAIRS



21

Looking through the cut area from the last step, push the lower half of the old arch away. Use a hammer to push the edge of the repair panel up to the edge of the old arch, then tack weld them together.



22

Continue cutting a short length along the repair panel and the old outer arch and tack welding them together. Eventually the lower half of the old arch will be cut off and can be pulled out, but this may not be so easy to do.



23

Once the outer arch repair panel has been spot welded in position, finish off with a stitch weld. Use an angle grinder with a sanding disc to remove the high spots of weld and achieve a smooth finish.



24

The arch seam where the inner and outer repair panels meet needs to be plug welded by drilling a series of 6 mm holes at 2 inch intervals. Pull the two panels together with mole grips when welding. Grind back any high spots of weld.



25

End result: the fitted, finished and painted arch.



The remains of Dougie's offside rear arch.

THANKS

To Specky for the donation of his garage and time to repair Dougie's rotting 4x4 Cav.

VAUX TECH

Buy & modify



CORSA GSi

They're getting rarer by the day, but the Corsa GSi is still massive fun. Here's what to look for if you're after one.

WORDS Dave Reid, Dougie **PHOTOS** Adrian Brannan

Launched in 1992, the Corsa GSi had a reputation to uphold. The Nova GTE (and later in GSi guise) had built up a loyal following for being a competent, quick and affordable part of Vauxhall's performance range. The Corsa was softer, rounder and more refined than its predecessor although bizarrely it was less well equipped. It did cost less than the Nova though – £10,970, as opposed to £11,680 for the outgoing model. This meant it was around £1800 less to buy than the top N/A hot hatch of the time, the Renault Clio 1.8 16V, which had 137bhp but a higher insurance group.

The car was well received, with a *What Car?* road test from 1993 rating the car four stars out of five and stating "Give it a clear road and the GSi really shines... good midrange punch, nice steering turn in, a fair amount of feel and respectable grip at public road pace make the GSi far more fun than the lesser Corsas."

It had all the requirements of a '90s performance Vauxhall and sat in the range below the 2.0 16V Astra GSi and Cavalier SRi nicely. Having sold in relatively low numbers and with time being hard on the baby GSi, good standard examples are getting increasingly difficult to find these days,

with most falling into a state of disrepair or they have been fitted with the obligatory 2.0 16V and turbo power plants from their larger siblings.

In standard (or even near-standard) form, a Corsa GSi is a rare find these days, but they are out there and in this guide we take you through what to watch out for when buying one, with assistance and advice from Belmont Vauxhall Senior Technician, George (Dod) Hudson.

Choose carefully and you can bag yourself a car that's enormous fun, looks great, is bursting with potential, and likely only to increase in value in years to come.

BUYING A CORSA GSi

■ ENGINE





TRANSMISSION

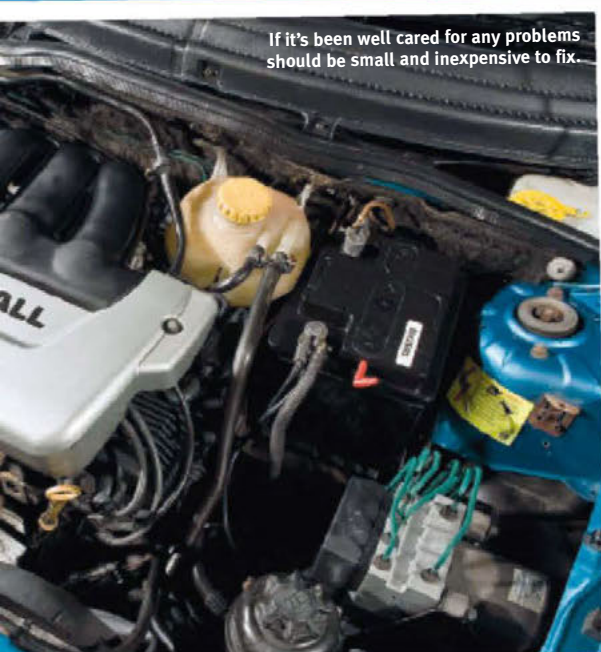
BUYING

It would appear very little goes wrong gearbox-wise on standard cars, perhaps the conservative power output of the engine is responsible for this but as with most GM boxes, they are strong but with the miles can become notchy and crunch into gear from cold. A high biting point would suggest the friction material on the clutch plate has

seen better days. Gearbox fluid changes are an overlooked service addition, but fresh oil can transform the gearbox. Gearbox linkages are generally robust but can become sloppy with age leading to excessive play in the gearstick, however rebuild kits are available at little cost and worth the effort. CV gaiters should be checked for evidence of splitting or leaking. A fresh gaitor could be hiding worn CV joints so check these by driving slowly on lock, listening for any clicking or baulking.



Even if the CV gaitors look fresh give them a check – they could be hiding worn CV joints.



If it's been well cared for any problems should be small and inexpensive to fix.

The Corsa GSi came fitted with Vauxhall's C16XE and latterly X16XE engines, namely a 1600cc twin cam 16V complete with multi-point fuel injection and a notoriously complex induction system which was responsible for a relatively conservative output of 107bhp and 109lb/ft of torque. When first launched, a number of cars suffered sticking valves although this was generally more common in low mileage cars. The official remedy was to remove the cylinder head and ream off the guides, however on cars with minor symptoms, many dealers opted for a can of Forte engine flush and a damn good thrash with varying degrees of success.

Given the age of the engines, finding a car suffering from this these days would be highly unlikely especially with most cars probably well past the 100k mark.

As with most engines, checking from cold and allowing it to run to temperature is a must whilst listening for any evidence of uneven idle or smoke from the rear. Head gaskets can fail and can be identified by excessive pressure build-up in the cooling system and white smoke from the exhaust. Oil leaks are common from the sump and rocker gaskets however replacement is a relatively inexpensive task. Leaks from behind the timing belt usually signify leaking camshaft

seals, again an inexpensive remedy. Timing belt schedules were originally set at eight years/80k but the rule of thumb is four years/40k is a more realistic timescale. Water pumps can corrode badly on cars with low coolant content, in addition to wear on the shaft it's advised the pumps be renewed at 80k intervals.

Oil changes should be carried out every 10,000 miles using quality semi-synthetic oil. Fuel and air filters are generally recommended every 20,000 miles and spark plugs being renewed every 40,000 miles. Evidence of fresh, clean fluids is generally a sign of a caring owner and should be an indication the car has been well cared for in its life.

PRICE GUIDE

Your best bet is to get registered on www.corsasport.co.uk and check the classified section there. They do crop up from time to time on Auto Trader, Pistonheads, etc – but we found it difficult to locate many GSis for sale, and all were modified to some degree. Mint standard cars are out there, you just have to be patient! eBay is worth a look too, but don't be tempted to buy one 'blind'. Always check it out before bidding.

Here are some examples we found lurking in the classifieds to give you an idea of the current prices. Obviously tired examples can be had for considerably less, and mint low mileage examples can hold onto their value well.



Gumtree £1800 ono

1993 GSi, 116k miles, just had timing belt, water pump, full service, undersealed, no rust, new coilovers, Piper exhaust, wheel bearing and discs and pads.



eBay £1650

1993 GSi, C20XE, 80K miles, Morettes, Smoke Grey, Calibra leather, coilovers, flocked dash



Gumtree £1100

1994 GSi, 75k, Calibra seats, lowered, battery in boot, flat floor, short MoT, age related marks, will take offers.

STEERING AND SUSPENSION

Given the age and mileage many examples have covered, it's unlikely you'll find original suspension and steering components. Ball joints and track rod ends are subject to normal wear and tear so listen for clunks from the front or while rocking the steering. Get under the car and check the tie bar bushes at the front crossmember for signs of perishing or cracking. While you're under there check the bottom track control arm bushes for signs of wear. Worn suspension bushes can lead to sloppy steering and assorted clunks and knocks, however replacing the majority of suspension components is relatively straightforward and inexpensive. Standard dampers were prone to bending their rods at the front and springs can fracture with age so check for signs of uneven ride height. Power steering racks are



strong but can leak from under the gaiters, replacement can be expensive so check the rack for signs of dampness. Again, clean power

steering fluid is a sign of a looked after car, but could also hint at previous issues so double check for leaks within the system.



INTERIOR

As with many '90s Vauxhall's the interior is more functional than fashionable but is hard wearing and well laid out. Unlike the Cavalier and Astra GSi, the miserly-specced Corsa didn't have the luxury of electric mirrors or windows (they were options

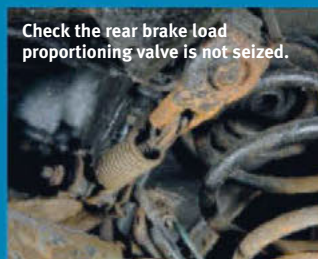
though), but if fitted ensure it all works correctly as repairs can be expensive. Seats are Recaro-based so extremely supportive but the bolsters can collapse and wear through, and sourcing replacements in good condition is very difficult. Check the dash illumination – dark sections will be the result of blown bulbs which are cheap to replace but a time consuming task. Steering wheels, gearknobs and gaiters, pedal covers and carpets are hard wearing but prone to wear with age. GM carpet mats are a welcome addition and hint at a caring owner. A squeaking clutch pedal is to be expected, it's a characteristic of the car but curable with copious amounts of white grease.



BRAKES

Fitted with ventilated front discs and drums at the rear, this setup is adequate for standard power if in good condition. The handbrake should lock after 3-4 clicks and feel free as any stiffness or excess travel could mean seized cables and a rear brake overhaul. The rear brake proportioning valve on the rear axle is prone to seizing so should be regularly lubricated, replacing it could see you up to

Check the rear brake load proportioning valve is not seized.



£150 worse off. Brake lines are well protected but check the ferrules at the

ends for corrosion. Brake fluid renewals are advised bi-annually – black fluid in the reservoir would suggest this hasn't been done on a regular basis, if at all. Finally check the rubber brake flexi-pipes for signs of leaks or perishing. Applying strong force to the pedal when stationary should result in a nice, firm pedal. Any evidence of the pedal sinking to the floor warrants extra investigation, ideally before the test drive!



■ BODYWORK AND CHASSIS

Corrosion, there's no denying it – these cars rust. With the youngest being 15-years-old now, finding a pristine example is unlikely. Surface rust is acceptable and treatable but deep set corrosion can lead to MoT failures and potentially the scrap yard. The front chassis legs at the base of the bulkhead are a known weak point – water can gather internally and rot them from the inside out. Repairs are possible but can prove expensive and at times uneconomical. Rear floor sections corrode around the rear of the sills while the sideskirts and rear bumper can hide all manner of scary surprises so ideally get under the car and have a good poke, especially at structural points and around the front suspension tie bars around the front crossmember. Fresh underseal may be nice to look at but be aware of corrosion hiding under the surface so take extra care.

The body itself is pretty robust

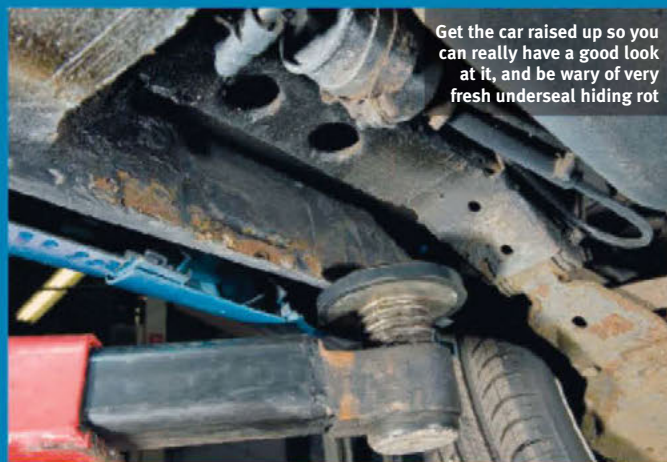


Bad colour matches and gaps between panels could point to accident repair.



and resists tin worm well but pay particular attention to the rear quarter panels at the window line where they meet the front doors, this area is prone to stress fractures, especially on lowered cars. You'll either find a nice crack, or evidence of a previous repair. Filling it with cataloy doesn't work so pay attention to cars that have had paintwork recently as this may be hiding something under the surface. Also check the fuel filler area as dirt collects around the pipework and causes it to rot. Rear tailgates corrode around the rear wiper and also to the left; finding a 2p sized rust scab in the middle of the tailgate is not uncommon. The smooth curve of the bonnet attracts stone chips, which can in turn corrode badly, as can the internal lip so open the bonnet and look up. While in there, check the headlights are secure as the small lower mounting clips can break meaning an annoying MoT failure for the want of a few pence.

The Corsa GSi came with a bodykit consisting of front bumper, sideskirts, arch mouldings and rear spoiler, all of which were fitted to a high standard. Poor colour matches and dubious panel gaps could hint at accident



Get the car raised up so you can really have a good look at it, and be wary of very fresh underseal hiding rot

repair so ensure everything lines up correctly. Missing sections of bodykit are expensive to replace and difficult to source second-hand, as are the front fog lights, which are prone to stone chips and cracks. The front splitter can take knocks easily so is more likely to be missing completely rather than damaged, again replacements are expensive and hard to source. All Corsa GSIs came with GSi badging front and rear, if it's missing ask why.



A chassis plating kit will strengthen weak points in the chassis.



MODIFYING THE CORSA GSi

SUSPENSION

This is one of the first areas you should look at on your Corsa GSi. The factory setup isn't bad (the shell is much tougher than a Nova), but it's not great either. A simple upgrade is to fit a strut brace, which will give an improvement on its own or in conjunction with other modifications. Massive improvements can be made with the simple addition of an uprated spring and shock absorber kit. You'll get better results from a

30/40mm drop kit than a 60mm one. If the car is only going to be used on the road, a fixed rate damping kit is fine and will transform the handling. If you want to be able to adjust your ride height, there are some very cheap coilovers around with prices as low as £150 for a full kit – Be aware that for that kind of price the ride will be 'challenging' and it's likely that they won't last long. A much better long term bet would be to opt for GAZ



Gaz dampers now come with a Black Zinc coating for a longer service life, and come with a 2 year warranty

Fitting poly bushes is a no brainer



suspension kits – £500 for the GHA kit rising to £920 for their impressive GGA kit. Their fully adjustable coilover kits are top quality, and you should make sure that the other suspension and steering components on the car are in excellent order.

Poly bushes are also worth considering. Powerflex do a full range of bushes for the B and they are

essential if you want the best from the chassis as it tightens things up nicely. Bushes can sometimes be tricky to remove though, so consider getting a reputable garage to do the work.

Finally, Chris Astley Motorsport offer a chassis plating kit for just £20, which consists of six plates and strengthens the area around the chassis legs and front crossmember. It's mainly aimed at cars with big block engine swaps or track cars.

MODIFYING

ENGINE

Here we're going to concentrate on basic tuning of the 1.6 16V. It's possible to spend five figure sums on these engines, but realistically, a solid reliable 150bhp can be attained for a reasonable price through bolt-on modifications. The earlier C16XE engines are considered more desirable by tuners as they are said to run a superior management system (an airflow meter as opposed to a MAP sensor) and no air injection or exhaust gas recirculation. These

early pre-August 1994 cars can be tricky to find now though and we'd recommend selecting a car on overall condition rather than the engine.

The exhaust back box is quite restrictive so changing that alone can improve responsiveness. For better results consider either a cat-back system, or even better combine it with a sports cat. LMF Vauxhall can supply a Remus exhaust, either a full system, or a back box (from £176), and Courtenay supply a range of Sportex systems

including a manifold (£202) and a decat pipe (£50). Changing from the factory manifold to a tubular one from the likes of Sportex can net up to 7bhp.

With the exhaust gases taken care of, it's time to turn to the notoriously restrictive inlet manifold. Legend has it that GM had it designed specifically to restrict the power output. German tuning companies Lexmaul and Mantzel supply replacement inlet manifolds. The Lexmaul item can be bought directly from their German website for

Replacing the inlet manifold can provide substantial power gains.



Getting rid of the restrictive standard induction system is a good way to unlock more power

415Euro and is said to increase power by around 10 to 13bhp. The Mantzel item is no longer available but they do turn up on forums and eBay from time to time. There are also some home-made items around, mostly based on the Mantzel – make sure you're getting the genuine article if that's what it's advertised as.

Further up the price scale is the Dbilas Flowtec inlet manifold available directly from Dbilas. The C16XE version comes in at 312Euro and the X16XE at 280Euro, both are plus shipping, so not cheap, but a worthy addition to your B.

■ BRAKES

The simplest upgrade for the Corsa GSi is to fit 256mm discs and calipers from an Astra or Cavalier. This will allow the factory 14in wheels to be retained. You can also choose from any number of upgraded pads and discs from the likes of EBC, Tarox, Black Diamond, Red Dot and more.

If you're willing to upgrade to 15in wheels, then 288mm four-stud upgrade kits are also available from LMF, for £295. If you're on a budget, then Cavalier/Calibra V6/Turbo calipers and pads can be used with Fiat Coupe 20V discs, although the hole centres will need to be widened slightly and the caliper carrier may need to be spaced back.



There's plenty of choice available when it comes to brake upgrades.

■ WHEELS AND TYRES

The Corsa came equipped with 185/60x14 tyres which are alright, but you can really improve the handling by upgrading to 15in wheels and 195/45 or 195/50 tyres. Using genuine Vauxhall wheels – there's loads around from Cavaliers and Astras – should avoid any issues with the tyres rubbing in the arches. 16in wheels will also fit, such as the massively popular Speedline Allessio. Remember if fitting aftermarket wheels that the offset on the Corsa is ET49 and if you stray too far from that, you're going to have clearance issues.



Switching to 15in wheels and tyres can offer improved handling

■ BODY

The GSi was the best looking of all Corsa Bs, so we'll come right to the point – leave it alone. Irmischer and Steinmetz did some cool stuff for the Corsa B, but it'll be a matter of sourcing it second-hand. Ultimately, like most performance Vauxhalls from the '90s, an original look is what's most desirable now.

CONTACTS

LMF
www.lmfvauxhall.co.uk

Courtenay Sport
www.courtenaysport.co.uk

Chris Astley
www.chrisastleymotorsport.co.uk

DBILAS
www.dbilas-shop.com

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www.gazshocks.com

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OMEGAMAN

@ Hey guys, genuine question here for you... where the hell have all the Omegas gone? I remember there used to be loads going about and a few really nicely modified ones but over the past couple of years they appear to have completely dried up. That's a crying shame and prompted me and my brother to think about buying one as a bit of a project but we can't decide on what to get and what to do. We don't want anything extreme, just a bit of power and grace. Any thoughts and erm, anybody got one they'd be willing to part with as they seem impossible to find in the North! **Andy and Craig.**

A Dave's never been quite the same since Dempsey scrapped his ex Police MV6 estate and Dougie still looks back at the old project car with

such fondness. Honest. Joking aside, we're with you on that one... Omegas are superb and yes, seem to have all but disappeared recently. Granted the pre-facelifts are nigh on 22 years old now but even the facelift models are proving hard to find. Our choice would be the very last of line 3.0 or 3.2 Elite with as many options and ideally a manual gearbox. Even in standard guise with a subtle suspension drop, they do look rather awesome and they go well too. To the classifieds!

That said, they lend themselves well to a bit more extreme modifying and we've seen the with C20LET, Saab B204 and V8 conversions over the years. They also proved to be quite popular with the drift guys a couple of years back and in fact our tame skidders, team Chizfab from Lochgelly ran a couple as drift taxis at PVS and they were brilliant. Ultimately, we'd be



Sadly, many Omegas have been drifted into oblivion

trying to find the cleanest example possible as rust was a killer on these big barges. We'd sort the suspension and really beyond a smattering of

Steinmetz and Irmischer, there's really not much needs to be done. A tweaked MV6 estate would be heroic. Do it!

FIRST TIMER

@ Hi chaps. My son, who clearly knows best... has decided that he's having a Corsa C when he passes his test next month (God loves the eternal optimist!) and he's already sprouting out a list as long as my arm detailing what he's going to do to it. Now don't get me wrong, I'm as much into the car scene as the next man but he's currently choosing to ignore his boring old fart of a dad telling him he can't have a 350bhp

LEH fitted on the drive by the time he has to go and collect his humourless girlfriend to chauffeur her to whatever social event she must attend in McDonalds via the medium of iPhone, I'm happy to help him out, I've been there and done that but I'm trying to be realistic here. It's his first car, he needs to walk before he runs so perhaps some words of wisdom from your good selves would bring him back into line. Thanks, **Daniel.**

A Ahhh hello, *Performance Vauxhall's* answer to Dear Deidre is in the house... and we hear what you are saying and we agree that these days, sadly insurance has had a serious detrimental effect on what young drivers can realistically (and legally) own and drive and when the minute modifications are mentioned, most companies will simply refuse to cover or present frankly ridiculous premiums. Ironically, he could probably insure something like a

standard Vectra VXR estate for less than a modified Corsa (perhaps) so that's worth investigating. Your comment about fitting a 350bhp LET, well to be fair we know of guys who were dropping LETs into Novas at 16 and younger so don't disregard his potential spanning skills. Sometimes it's not the building that holds young drivers back, it's the insuring.

As for the base car, it's pretty much spot on and ticks the boxes for a young driver though we'd be looking at the 1.2 16v SXi as the likes of a 1.0 Life can be a bit too basic to meet the approval of the car park crew. The 1.2 16v is a bit more robust too as long as you keep it serviced and make sure there's no evidence of the dreaded death rattle from the timing chain or camshafts.

Assuming he's a sensible lad, we'd be tempted to look at something like an Astra SXi or similar as sometimes they can be cheaper to insure. Again this all comes down to the budget available, we're assuming he's on a normal basic wage and has a couple of grand to get him on the road.

The most vital thing to remember is it's all about the NCB! No claims means that insurance goes down, and car options go up – so drive like a saint for the first couple of years, and reap the rewards later.



Even a 1.0 Corsa can make a sound base for modifying

If ride comfort's your thing, then it's probably best not to go this low



SHOCK THERAPY

@ My 2005 Signum CDTi is due a bit of a suspension overhaul as it's getting a bit vague and noisy. I'm planning on replacing the lower arms, the steering parts, drop links and the rear trailing arms then I'll get the geometry done. I'm just fitting standard OEM parts as I don't want the ride to be too hard but my garage suggested I replace the shock absorbers at the same time. I don't want to lower it and I also have terrifying memories of my old Astra GTE with its rock solid Koni suspension and I definitely don't want that! That said, I'd like to perhaps stiffen up the ride a little bit just to help combat a bit of the floatiness the car tends to suffer. Have you got any recommendations or should I just get myself kitted out with standard Vauxhall parts? Thanks, *Peter.*

A Hats off to you for giving the entire set up an overhaul as so many people replace one part and can't understand why it still drives like an old shopping trolley... chains are only as strong as the weakest link and all that. Shock absorbers, yes definitely a good call as the original ones will be beyond their best by now which could explain that floatiness and poor road holding you're suffering. Now, as with any worn part on a car, fitting new will always feel better even if the new part is standard spec. On that basis, fitting OEM shock absorbers will be an improvement however we'd always be inclined to go one step further. Granted yes, you don't want your fillings coming out but then again, some people do which is why it's very difficult to recommend the 'best' setup for an individual. Another thing to consider is that a car will drive and ride very differently depending on the springs fitted, for

example a standard spring and mildly uprated damper will be much more compliant than a mildly uprated damper along with a 30mm lowering spring. Likewise, spring rates can differ so there are a multitude of combinations out there which is ultimately why we also recommend fitting a suspension kit where the springs and dampers are matched. Yes, you can go mega low and with zero give but for everyday driving we'd be looking at the Bilstein B12 Pro-Kit for around £700. Not cheap but they are well made and will make a huge difference without being harsh and uncompromising. It may be worth jumping on the forums and asking fellow owners what they have and even getting a run in a couple of cars to help you gauge how they drive. Owners forums are generally full of helpful types so we're sure somebody will be obliging and give you the lowdown on your options.

BAD VIBRATIONS

@ Hi there, I'm having a really annoying issue with my 2008 Astra VXR. It started getting a bit of a wobble at motorway speeds so I took it in and had the wheel balance checked plus the garage checked for tyre distortion and any buckles. They said it was fine but the issue is still there. It's getting worse and the car seems to wander a bit plus it feels like it has a warped disc now too. I've also noticed a clunk over speed bumps but the garage have checked everything and say the bushes, drop links and steering arms are fine so have basically said there's nothing more they can suggest. The car is standard aside from a set of lowering springs. Any ideas as it's starting to become a bit of an issue now. Cheers. *Mikey.*

A We hear these sort of issues a lot with random but persistent issues and the garage simply gives up. At the end of the day, if it doesn't feel or sound right, it probably isn't so some more investigation work is needed and if they can't be bothered, find a decent garage who can. There are numerous things that could cause those symptoms starting with wheel balance, tyre distortion, buckled, worn bushes, balljoints, track rod ends, steering arms, play in the rack and even poorly adjusted wheel alignment however adding up all the symptoms and disregarding the parts you've had checked (though we'd maybe get them rechecked, just to be sure) then we'd be tempted to have a look at the top mounts. They can and do wear which in turn can cause movement in the entire strut which would certainly



manifest in a loose feeling through the steering and poor road holding. If it is the top mounts, fear not as it's not a difficult job and the parts aren't expensive via the likes of Autovaux. As with all suspension work, it's always advised to have the geometry checked afterwards to ensure the camber and toe angles are within spec.

Quick fixes

Q Guys, one of the front springs on my Insignia CDTi has just snapped (that's the second!) so I'm wondering if swapping brands from the GM originals would be beneficial? Any recommendations? *Craig*

A Not uncommon, blame the roads for that one I'm afraid. You could upgrade to the likes of a Eibach Pro-Kit for a reasonable £199 via LMF Vauxhall. It'll also sit slightly lower and handling will be improved. A cheaper option would be an Apex spring kit can be had for £132. Give the guys a call.

Q Hello, can you tell me if the 308mm brakes from an Astra Turbo would be a direct fit on to my 1.8 Coupe? Also, are the rear brakes any bigger on the turbo models? *Kevin*

A The fronts will be a direct replacement as long as you get the caliper carriers too. The rears are all the same size on the disc equipped 'G' models. Astra VXR 320mm fronts also fit as do their 278mm rears with a little work though these still command a premium second hand. The 308s will do the job.

Q I have a 2.0 16v Corsa and I think the head has gone porous, any chance you would know of a company who can fix this without charging a fortune or is it a pointless exercise? Thanks. *Ben*

A Odd, given the age most GM heads that can go porous will have done so by now. It's no biggie, plenty guys out there can sleeve or bypass the offending oil gallery. Best bet is pop some details on on the likes of MIG, there's a number of guys who'll be able to put this right without charging a fortune. Cheers!

Q I've just bought a Cat D Vectra VXR with the airbags out. Can I just get a couple from a breaker and plug them in? Anything else I should know? *Derek.*

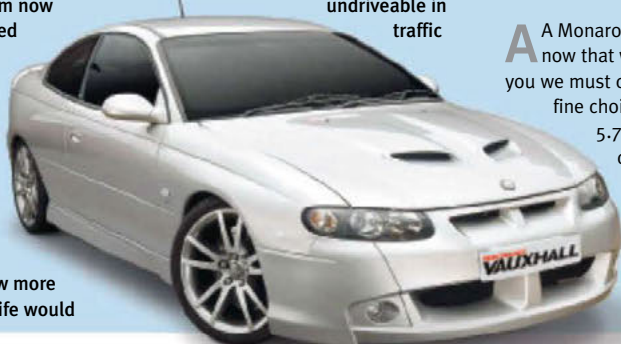
A Yes, second hand units will work however you'll need the fault codes reset with Tech 2 or similar and bear in mind, when the passenger bag goes off it takes out the dash too so you'll need to replace the lot. That's not a pleasant task on a Vectra. Good luck!

Q&A

MORE POWER

@ Bit of advice please regarding my 2004 Monaro VXR. I've owned it for a couple of years now and it's been a fabulous bit of kit but I'm now starting to get a bit bored and with my summer bonus burning a hole in my pocket, I'd like a bit more power. I've got about a grand to spend and don't worry, suspension and brakes are already mildly tweaked so they'll be fine with a few more horses... not sure the wife would

agree but she's already scared of it so what the hell eh! Oh and I should mention that this is my daily driver so I don't want anything that'd make it to undrivable in traffic



and so on. Just needs that wee bit something to give it a bit extra kick. Thanks boys.
Colin.

A A Monaro VXR as a daily driver... now that we've finished hating you we must congratulate you on a fine choice for the daily grind. 5.7 litres of V8 goodness certainly beats a diesel with EcoStart or whatever it's called these days. Anyway... we had a think, made some calls and realistically in the

serious world of LS V8 tuning, £1000 won't buy you a huge amount of power but you can start building for the future. The replies we got were pretty unanimous and all pointed towards a decent exhaust system and as many a V8 owner will testify, the boys at Monkfish are well worth a call. They currently stock a Wortec cat back system which comes in under your budget and will leave enough for the tank of fuel you will inevitably burn as you spend an hour looking for tunnels to rip through. You should see a fairly good power increase too especially if combined with an induction kit. Give the guys a call!

VIVA FOREVER

@ Guys, I'm sitting here at the breakfast table reading some inane car magazine that obviously doesn't match your fine publication and I was outraged to learn of the 'new' Vauxhall Viva. In fact I spat my generic cereal out all over the dog. This isn't right, tarnishing the fine name of a bygone era filled with the reek of four star, tortured cross ply tyres and Brylcreem. Surely this can't

be right? The Viva was a fine machine that I fondly remember drifting round the roundabout just off the A9 at a heady 12mph thanks to the ridiculous lack of grip before heading home to rebuild the entire thing using a flat head screwdriver and a 13mm box spanner. You need to enlighten me and tell me it can't be true! Yours, shocked.
Bob Grant.

A Yes Bob, alas it is true and and we've already welcomed the arrival of the new Viva but you'll be relieved (possibly) to know that Vauxhall's latest model shares bugger all with the original. Powered by a 1.0 3 cylinder engine, the Korean built super-mini is set to take on the likes of the Suzuki whatever-it-is and pushbikes. We can't but help feel its appeal to our core reader base with be somewhat

limited given the Adam hasn't really caught on with the modified scene either. Your mum may like it but we aren't holding our breath nor are we setting several pages aside for the first modified one to appear in *Performance Vauxhall*. As for the "Just like the old Viva. But completely different" Hmmm, we'll reserve judgement but we can't but help think the name should have been left back in the 70s.

GET IN LINE

@ Gents, bit of an issue with my Nova that I've been busy recommissioning over the past few months. It was standard when I bought it but was starting to rot in the usual places so I sent it off for arches, doors, some localised repairs and a full hit of paint. I also had all the running gear and suspension parts powder coated and they're now refitted along with poly bushes throughout so it's back on its wheels. On that note, I've just fitted some Softstars with 195/45x16 tyres but the N/S/R is catching on the arch. The car is lowered about 50mm. I know Nova rear beams are offset but this one seems excessive as there's a good 5mm on the driver's side whereas the passengers is catching constantly. On that note,

I'm also struggling to get the tailgate to line up perfectly so I think it has a slight twist... any idea where to source another as they're almost unheard of second hand and are no longer stocked by Vauxhall.
Nik.

A It's a well known fact that most 80s/90s Vauxhall had slightly offset rear beams and this is well documented on them since the dawn of time and yes, it can cause some issues depending on the wheel choice (offset, width, tyre choice) and it's pretty much a given that if you fit bigger wheels and/or lower said cars, you'll probably need to dress the inner arch lip a smidge to get the clearance. When we say a smidge, usually a couple of millimeters with

Nova restos can uncover a world of pain!



the grinder is sufficient but in your case, it seems like the issues is a little more pronounced and we're sorry to say, that does set off some alarm bells.

First, is the rear beam is centralised correctly with the bushes seated fully home and are you confident the beam is true and square? On that note, bear in mind if the beam has been damaged, it may well be that the

N/S/R has too much positive camber which would pull the top of the wheel out and give the illusion that the beam is off centre. Perhaps a geometry check should be first on the list? Moving away from the beam, you say the car has had arches so it could be a poor job or indeed an aftermarket repair panel that has slightly different dimensions to the originals. If the car has had a full quarter, does it align correctly (the boot alignment is worth noting here!) It could be the case that the arch protrudes by an extra couple of millimeters and the camber is a couple of millimeters out and hence when combined...? We'd get the rear geometry checked first then if all is well, consider take the arch lip back a fraction.

Quick fixes

Q I've got a Corsa GSi, totally standard and pretty tidy and I was debating selling it but my mate says there are less than 50 left so I'd be stupid to get rid as they're going up in value. Is he right or making up random stuff again?
Dean

A According to "How Many Left", there are 57 examples registered and a rather sizeable 243 declared SORN. So bang on 300 left in the UK but your friend is correct, only about 50 left on the road. As for their valued, good ones are starting to creep up slowly as are many 90s performance models. That said, you won't be

retiring on the proceeds anytime soon.

Q I've not long bought a fairly presentable Nova with a 16v conversion but someone has seen fit to wrap the bonnet and roof in matt vinyl. How the hell do I get it off? Please help me!
Don

A Heat is your friend but in moderation. A hot air gun on low setting or if you're brave, her prized hairdryer. The trick is to soften the glue, not melt it and then gently peel it off in one sheet. If you have two pairs of hands it helps so enlist a mate and pray it doesn't take the paint with it.

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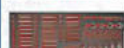
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STAFF CARS

What we've done with our cars this month

THE TV FLEET

DAN FURR **IRMSCHER MV6**

BOUGHT 2014

STATUS Really cracking along now - brakes this month.



DAVE **CAVALIER TURBO**

BOUGHT 2003

STATUS On road: Eh, no... Don't even go there...



JAMIE **CARLTON**

BOUGHT 2012

STATUS Yet another change of venue means that progress is slow again!



DOUGIE **CAVALIER GSi 4x4 V6**

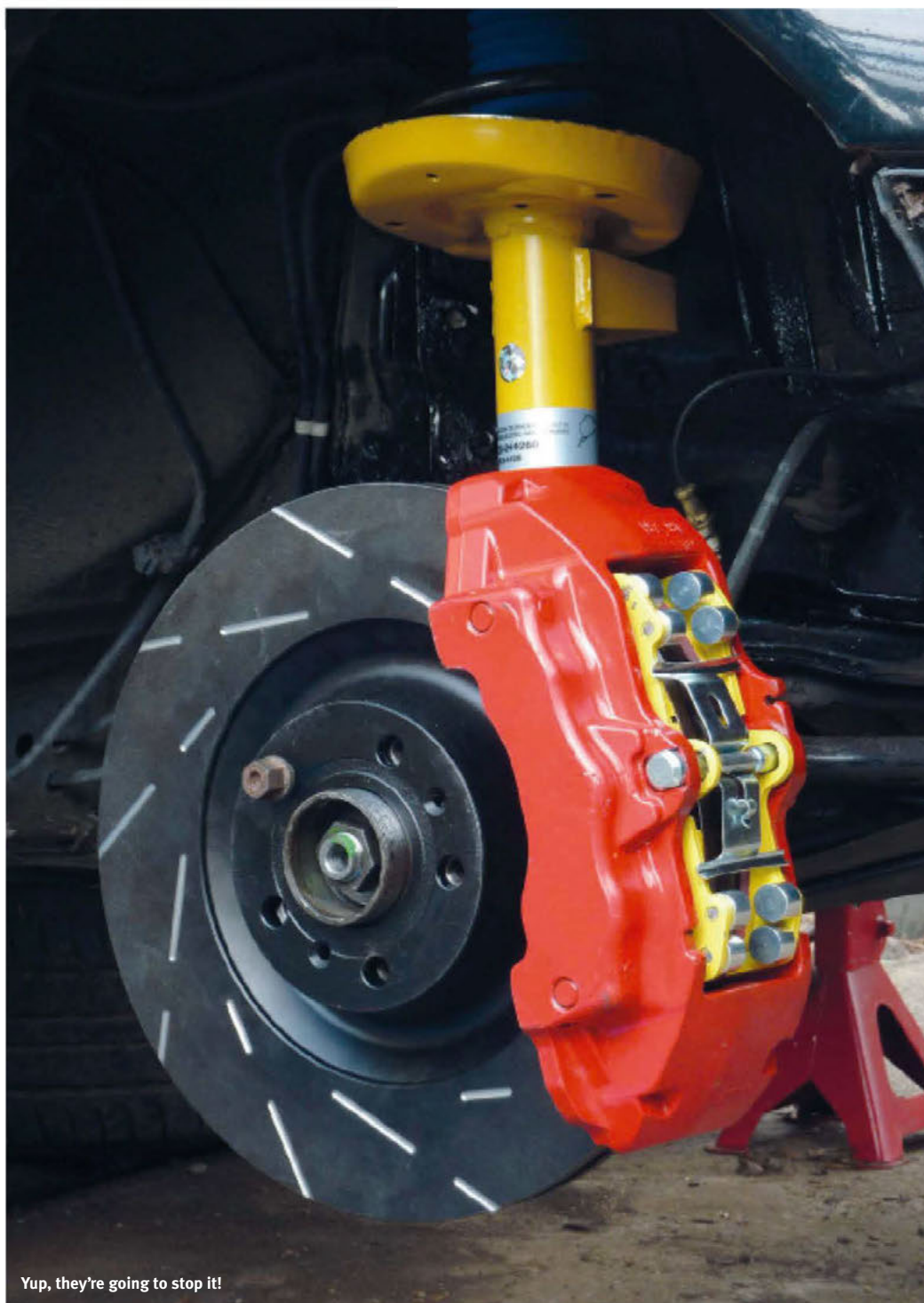
BOUGHT 2006

STATUS Parked up and awaiting some loving.



DAN FURR **MV6**

TOUGH BRAKE



Yup, they're going to stop it!

With plans to fit a more powerful engine further down the line, I was keen to source a hefty set of anchors for the MV6. My first instinct was to look at off-the-shelf solutions. Discussions with various companies at home and abroad revealed a number of bolt-on options that I could take advantage of, but I couldn't help but get the sense that I was being offered 'show brakes' in place of some serious stopping power.

Anyone interested in motorsport will know that professional racing teams tend to equip their cars with Brembo, AP Racing or Alcon brake kits. If the output of these manufacturers is good enough for contesting championship title races, then I'm pretty sure that it will be fine for my trusty ol' Vauxhall! Needless to say, I began to draw up a list of OEM brake kits as supplied by 'the big three' to European premium car makers.

BMW E38 four-piston Brembos and Lotus Carlton AP Racing calipers quickly appeared at the top of my hit list, but a chat with Seweryn Sidor (a fellow Irmischer-kitted Griffin owner and proprietor of Cambridgeshire-based Vauxhall specialist, SOS Automotive) opened my eyes to the giant six-piston

You just can't go wrong with a set of EBCs



There's no missing those massive Porsche brakes



Brembo stoppers fitted to Porsche Cayenne Turbos. Furthermore, Sew reckoned that he could supply me with suitable caliper brackets made out of aerospace grade billet aluminium. Top banana!

An eBay search produced a reasonably priced – if badly painted – pair of Cayenne Turbo six-pots, and I made contact with EBC Brakes when sourcing pads and discs. The British firm is a world leader when it comes to the supply and manufacture of

precision discs and performance pads, and the EBC team couldn't have been more helpful when it came to selecting parts that would suit my custom brake kit.

EBC Ultimax Audi A8 Quattro 360mm slotted discs and Cayenne Turbo Yellowstuff pads landed on my doorstep a short while later. As expected, the MV6's hubs needed to be modified in order to accept the discs (another trip to Sew's was in order!), but I'm pleased to report that everything bolted into place without issue during a subsequent first fitting session. Well, almost without issue...

The Porker runs 350mm discs, and its six-pot Brembos have a tolerance that will allow for 356mm discs under 18in rims. Perhaps unsurprisingly, I was pushing my luck with 360mm rotors! I'm determined to get the parts to work alongside one another without complaint though. A trip back to the machine shop will follow this update. I'm confident in my assumption that success will be the order of the day, and I'll start overhauling the rear brakes as soon as I've got the fronts behaving and painted in a fetching shade of yellow. Watch this space!

THANKS

EBC Brakes

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Ooh, shiny Cayenne calipers, soon to be repainted yellow



Custom brackets are required to make them fit





Will the Turbo see the light of day again?



DAVE **CAVALIER TURBO**

SLOW PROGRESS

I hate this bit of the job. This is the bit where Dan goes "So, got an update for me?" and I then stare at my feet and mutter stuff about Volvo estates and "it's on the list" and stuff like that. Truth is, my one and only Vauxhall is the Turbo and it's just a huge pile of bits spread across several boxes and what feels like several regions too. Dempsey pointed out that it's been six years since it was last seen and driven. Aye cheers neebur. Do I miss it... well, actually no, not really. Yes it has huge sentimental value so I'd never sell it but then I simply don't know what to do. Make it mint and not drive it to keep its value? As Facebook pointed out, that's like not having sex with the missus for the next bloke's

benefit. Maybe I should just throw it back together and drive it... or kick it round Knockhill... or just continue to ignore it in the hope that one day Car SOS or Chip Foose will sort it out for me. That said, I do miss my Cavalier fix. I probably kinda regret selling the 1995 SRi 16v hatch I had, it was properly clean old thing but again was sat doing bugger all aside from being a financial drain and a constant distraction.

So, Cavalier woes aside... the only remaining Vauxhall on fleet is my sister's 2003 Astra Coupe. It's a pain at times as it reminds me how much I miss my old GSi Turbo which is one of the few cars that I really do regret selling. Well, aside from the SRi. Who owns it now? The GSi Turbo that is. Last



I heard it was in Northern Ireland. Do you own it? Do you want to sell it? Is that like going back to an ex... bah, bloody cars. Anyways, yes... the Coupe, well it just gets on with things and never seems to complain. I keep looking for stuff to fix on it but short of a wash and a polish, that's pretty much it on a monthly basis. I could bore you all into submission with my endless Volvo related tales about how amazing T5's are and how they scare the shite out of Germans in Astra OPCs at 150mph. Was that you in the red one near Koblenz last month, if so then maybe you need a stage one map. I'd quite like a Mk5 Astra SRi Turbo estate with the XP kit... I may have mentioned that before. I may have complained they're

rather bloody dear for what they are and that a Vectra VXR estate makes more sense in my head. In black. Dechromed. 350bhp. Mmmm....

One thing's for sure the Cav missed Billing this year, so shall we say 2016 will be the return of OUF, only 7 years after its last appearance. Or maybe 2018 which would mark its 25th year. Sod it, I'm on the case but in the meantime, any local painters fancy a challenge...? I'll bring the Jaffa Cakes and Irn Bru.



Dave still gets his Griffin fix working on his sister's Coupe

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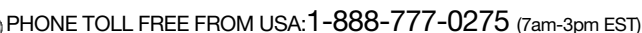
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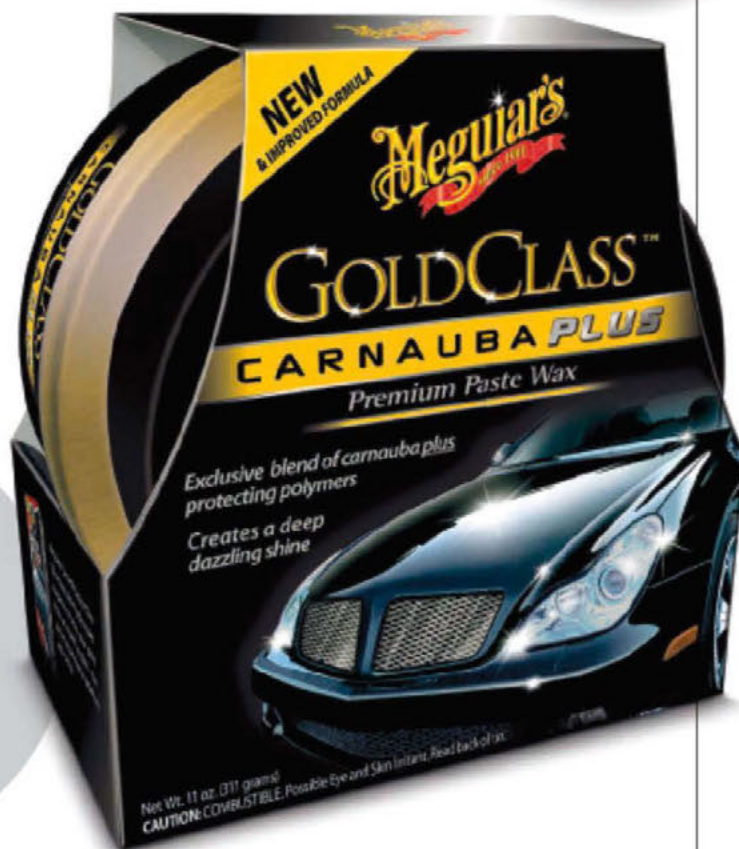
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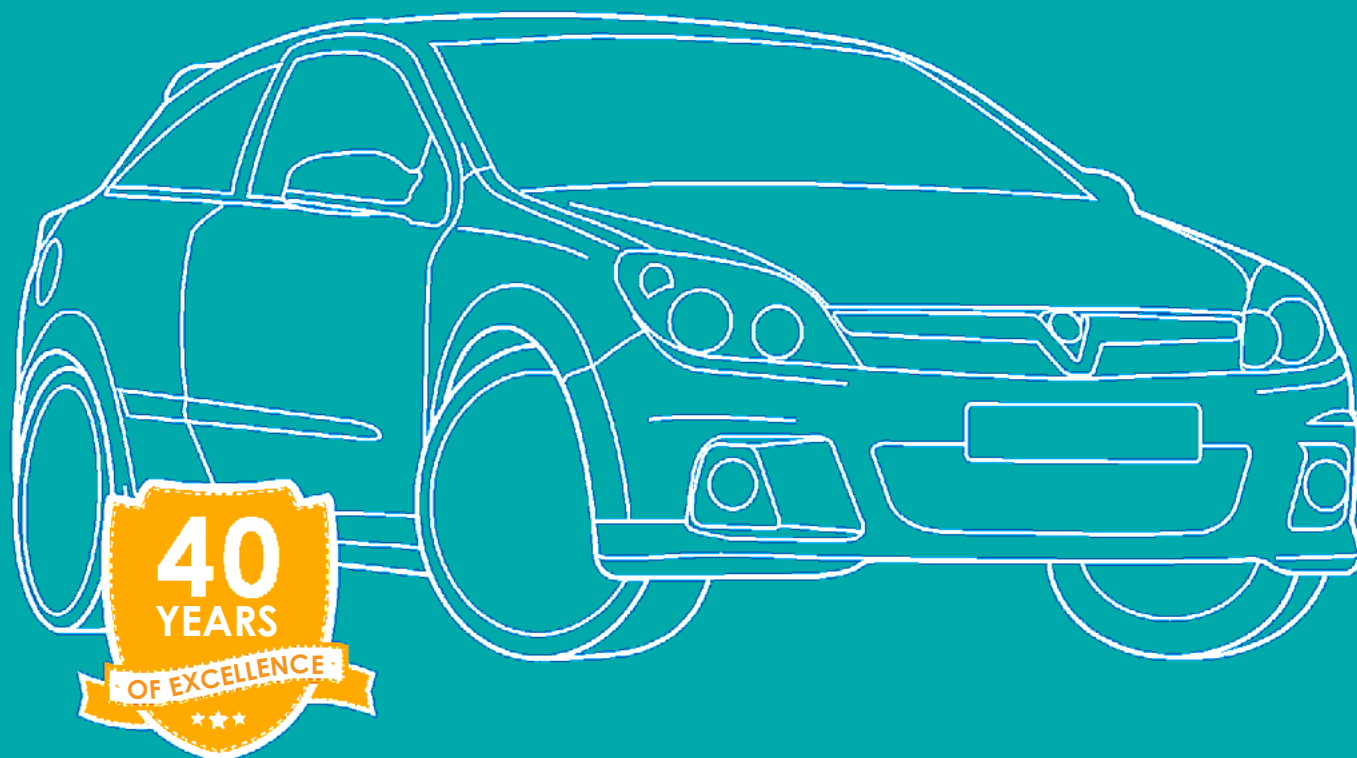


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Astra**ASTRA**

2013, 12,600 miles, £8,995. The interior is as new with genuine over mats fitted (still as new). The engine bay is spotless and as new and is very good (55mpg +) on fuel. The heated leather seats are immaculate as you would expect. 07783 887413 (JP)

ASTRA 14

1995, 60,000 miles, £175 ono. Tidy car, needs a few jobs. Two tyres, rear exhaust box. No rot. West Yorkshire. 07757 104830 (RB)

ASTRA LIFE 16

2004, Just over 86,000 miles, £1,600. MoT until Dec 15. Only had 3 owners. Great car in nice condition and drives well. I have had the following work done: Battery 2013. Angle Sensor - 2013. Had a car hit me from behind in 2014 - replaced rear bumper, trim, tailgate etc. Cam-belt change in Nov 2014. Ignition coil in Feb 2015. Hertfordshire. 07855 424074 (HP)

ASTRA MK2

1991, £3,750. 18 SXi, in very good condition, not much to make concourse, lots of work done, new wheel arches and back of sills been Waxoiled, original service small history file, long MoT. West Sussex. 01273 495734

ASTRA SRI 190

95,000 miles, £3,100 ovno. 2 months mot very clean vxr seats front and rear running 286 bhp with print out Koni adjustable suspension engine spec to much to list cam eds inlet manifold hybrid k04 lightened flywheel loads, must be seen will be at trax. 07477 601769

Belmont**BELMONT**

1989, £1,500. Mint belmont everything is original car starts first times and runs sound. West Midlands. 07967 804085 (JP)

Cadet**CADET**

1933, £10,000 ono. Four door saloon, black over burgundy, present owner 42 years, excellent wedding car, wire wheels, original leather. Essex. 01268 422213

Carlton**CARLTON**

1984, £1,500. Automatic. All genuine parts. Mot October. Nottinghamshire. 07889 899686 (JP)

CARLTON CDI

1993, £600. MoT failure, dark red, alloy wheels, clean interior, same owner since 2000, lovely car would make good restoration project, needs welding underneath floor etc, serious enquiries only please. Dyfed. 07974 609857

CARLTON GSI 24V

1992, £5,500 ono. Excellent condition for age. No rust or welding underneath. Just passed mot with flying colours. Swartz black. 3 owners from new. Stainless steel custom exhaust with correct twin box system by longlife at a cost of 700 pounds. Cleveland. 07414 264814 (JP)

Cavaller**CAVALIER G.L.S HATCH**

1995, 95,000 miles, £375. 2 Litre twin O.H.C Engine as in SRI. Metallic green. MoT 25/4/16. Owned and garaged for 11 years. Please call for more details details. South Norfolk. 01953 789991

CAVALIER MK2 SALOON

1983, £1,000 ono. An unfinished project! 80,768 car mileage. Garaged, non-runner, buyer to collect. Price includes many spares - for sale as job lot only. Yorkshire. 01723 870934 (HP)

CAVALIER SRI

1995, 118,000 miles, £1,250. Mk3 2.0i 16valve. M reg for sale, comes with alloys, pas, electric front windows, cd player, 11 mths MoT, no Tax due to new rules and regulations. Good inside and out, starts first time and drives fine. Tyne And Wear. 07984 382791 (HP)

Chevette**CHEVETTE**

9,000 miles, £0 offers. Undersealed properly from new, so body is excellent. Drives like new. One previous elderly lady owner. V5 present. Water pump has slight leak - new pump supplied with car. Paint faded in a few spots. 0035387 2631931

CHEVETTE

1983, 36,000 miles, £1,900. Garaged and unused for 13 years until recently. Runs and drives very well. Comes with masses of spares to keep it roadworthy. Never welded and unusually solid. 0877618490 (JP)

CHEVETTE L

1982, £820. Four door saloon, good runner, good interior, no rust. Somerset. 01458 210520

Corsa**CORSA**

1998, £650. 4 door saloon, 12cc. MoT till March 2016. Good runner. Same owner years. No offers. Lancashire. 07835 651411 (RB)

CORSA

2001, £550 ono. 1.0 LS, 12V, 5 door, 11 months MoT, some new parts, well looked after, cheap tax & insurance, ideal first car, good runner, Salmon red (pink). Leicestershire. 07594 469115

CORSA

2007, 102,000 miles, £2,450. MoT. vgc no dents or digs, no rust very clean, runs well, one owner. Sussex. 01825 740978 (HP)

CORSA

2008, 25,320 miles, £3,650 ono. All Breeze refinements i.e. Alloy Wheels, Electric Windows, Electric Mirrors, F/S/H, CD Player, Aux Output. MOT to 26/02/2016. Excellent condition. Lincolnshire. 07795 950114 (JP)

MONTANA

1995, £Around £1,000. 3 door hatchback 1196cc, low mileage, in excellent condition, ready to use and enjoy. Lancashire. 01524 406398

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£Offers. Standard rear diffuser, intercooler, white V grill, black wing mirrors ex glass (damaged), clutch, flywheel, JS performance dump valve, hose (blue), CD 30 black radio. Cheshire. 01606 551200 (PB)

Cresta**CRESTA**

1962, £14,500 ono. 2.6. poss earth, alternator, electric fan on radiator. Electronic ignition. New Respray, converted to unleaded, All chrome is new. This car must be seen to appreciate the work care and money spent on the upkeep of this Cresta. Bedfordshire. 01582 872684 (HP)

PB

1964, 9,999 miles, £POA. Hydromatic complete. The body is gone, standing too long at the see. It has got 60s woolfrace wheels. On a Sorn. East Sussex. 01273 589835

Monterey**MONTEREY 3.1 TD**

£POA. Limited Edition 4x4. Leather Seats-Alloys-Tow Bar-Stereo & MOT. ALSO Buccaneer Caravan 2 Birth Elite 15 1996 Would swap both for a Camper Van or Classic Car. Or would sell separate. FOR SALE or PART EXCHANGE. Scotland. 01698 373350

Nova**NOVA**

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NOVA

1985, 38,000 miles, £1,500. 1 years MoT. 2 door. Best service history your ever come across. Car is in great condition but the bottom of the rear arches are rusty and need a little attention. Middlesex. 07879 783782 (JP)

NOVA 14 SR

1990, 45,000 miles, £4,700. Excellent condition, no rust anywhere, new exhaust and battery, brakes, no tears in seats bolster, factory sun roof, very rare now, 154 cars on the road. Kent. 01622 746305

NOVA GTE

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Vectra**VECTRA**

2001, 61,155 miles, £825 Or near offer. 1 family owned since new, full vauxhall service history, 1 years mot with no advisories, 6 months tax, all old mots and some receipts, power steering, remote central locking with 2 keys. Scotland. 07543 311244 (JP)

VECTRA

2004, £895 Offers invited. MoT september 2015 and tax july. starts and drives all fine plenty of power 6 speed. Comes with full leather sat nav needs disc cd shuttle loader heated seats. Bodywork has few marks and dents. Nottinghamshire. 07977 770030 (JP)

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2001, £299. 2.2 litre petrol engine. Excellent runner, e/windows/sunroof/ mirrors/sp/steering, r/cassette with 6x cd/ auto-changer, air-con, m/f/s/wheel, 2x airbags, alloy wheels, beige velour interior. London. 07950 338604 (HP)

Victor**VICTOR 2000**

1969, 62,000 miles, £1,500. MoT 26th April 2015, Tax exempt. 3 speed column change. This car has recently had £500 spent on bodywork repairs, including a replacement inner and outer sill, replacement rear wheel arch, repairs to the other rear wheel arch and 3 doors repaired and painted. Tyne And Wear. 07966 155987 (HP)

Viva**VIVA ESTATE HB**

1970, £600. In need of restoration to the front wing and rear arches. Parts to be sold separate. Break pads, clutch, exhaust. Dunfermline. 07513 584847 (PB)

Vivaro**VIVARO**

2005, £850. Mint van, off road 12 months, body A1, all working, runs well but engine needs work, will swap for bigger van - pickup, WHY, with cash. Lancs. 07773 486634

VX220**VX220**

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VX4/90**VX 490**

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Zafira**ZAfIRA**

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VAUXHALL ASTRA MK 4 (G)

2003, £Various. 4 Spax adjustable shocks, £100 ono. Inpro dark smoke rear lights, £50. North Yorkshire. 07746 977299 (RB)

VAUXHALL CAVALIER

1994, £POA. Two headlights, two rear lights, two front indicators, two alloy wheels. All off 1994 Cavalier. Cheap for quick sale. West Yorkshire. 07757 104830

VAUXHALL CAVALIER

£POA. Various Vauxhall parts for sale inc. MK1 Cavalier, Opel Monza parts. Many lamps, book manuals etc. Phone for list or sell complete. Essex. 07535 973500 (JP)

VAUXHALL CAVALIER MK1

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VAUXHALL CORSA

£POA. 2007 onwards, tailgate spoiler with brake light- please call with offers. Bristol. 07502 032532 (JW)

VAUXHALL FRONTERA / FORD CAPRI

1996, £POA. 2 front wings and plastic inserts in very good condition, £30. Tailgate for Mk II Capri, no glass, in very good condition, £20. With rear spoiler. Various other items. Call for details. West Yorkshire. 07808 887093 (PB)

PARTS WANTED**VAUXHALL CORSA**

Wanted. 15inch wheels. Nothing special. West Midlands. 01543 378719 (PB)

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